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Timimbang-Botitian Sustainable Forest Management (TBSFM) Project In Beluran Forestry District

Introduction

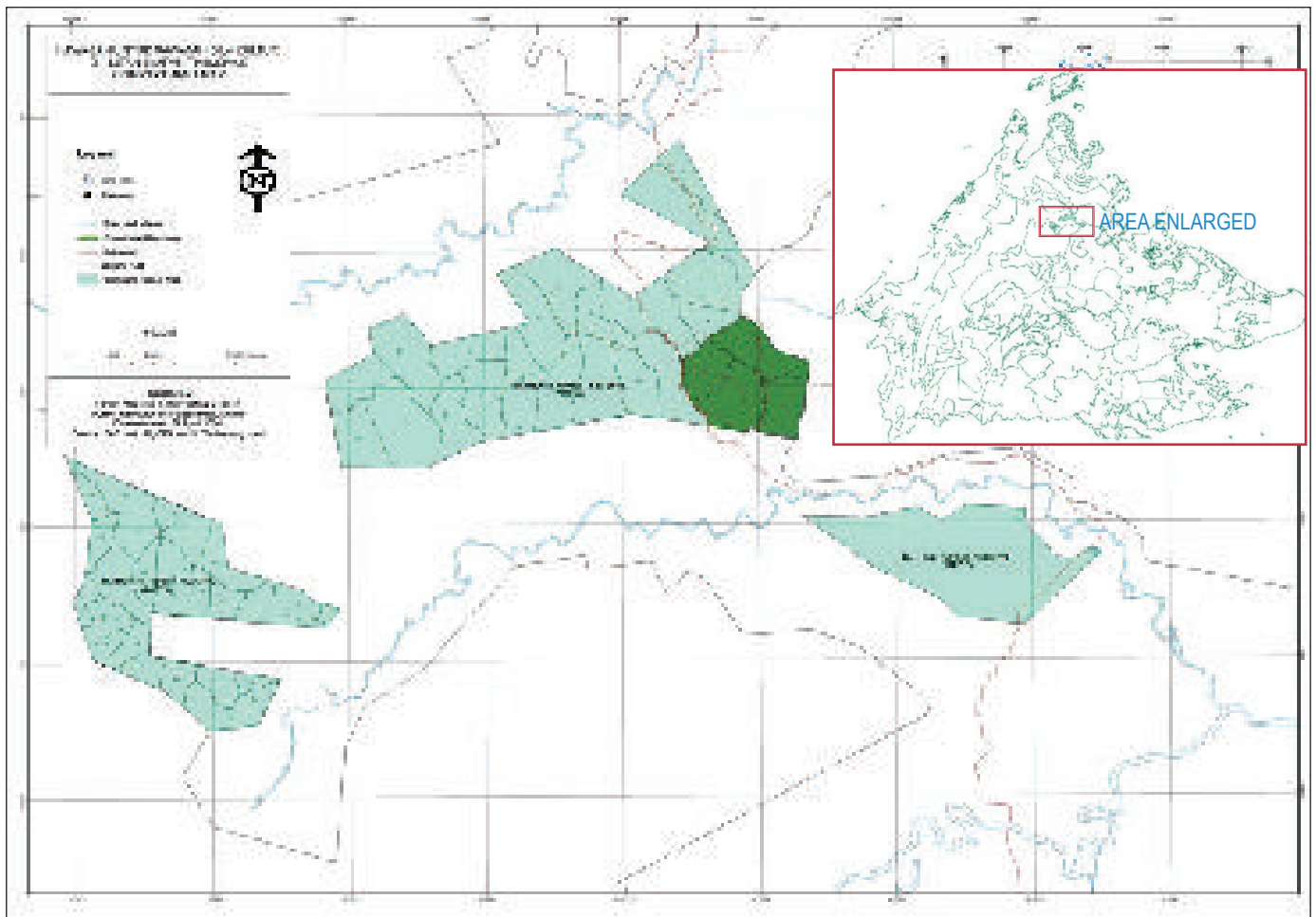
The purpose of this paper is to report on the achievements of the Timimbang-Botitian Sustainable Forest Management Project under FMU 18 in the District Forestry of Beluran in 2008.

This project is financed under the “Community Forestry Project (CFP) Trust Fund”, amounting to RM5 million. A number of activities were planned in the AWP 2008, and implemented throughout the fiscal year. Silviculture operations started in the first quarter of 2008 covering an area of 1000 hectares in compartments 5, 6, 7 and 8 of Timimbang Forest Reserve (TFR), (Map 26.1). This was followed by boundary survey and demarcation of TFR (Part A and Part B) with a total distance of 82,000 meter. The surveys were contracted out to 2 private surveyors namely; Jurukur Masa S/B for Part A and Perunding Teknologi Ukur for Part B. Two separate Wildlife surveys were conducted by HUTAN (Kinabatangan Orang-utan Conservation Project-KOCP) in Botitian forest Reserve (BFR) in 2007 and in TFR in 2008. This exercise is

needed as part of the requirement for the development of a Forest Management Plan (FMP) for the TBSFM. Planting of fast growing tree species such as Laran, Binuang, Pulai Bukit, and Gaharu was carried out in a 69-hectare encroached area of TFR Part B. This work was contracted out to AY Enterprise. The planting activity was completed in December 2008. The Construction of Timimbang Rainforest Lodge (TRL) at the Timimbang Base Camp was approved in mid- 2008, in order to accommodate outstation officers and staff. Construction work will be carried out in 2009.

On the 25th July 2008, the Director of Forestry (DoF) and his entourage made a working visit to TBSFM Project. A week later, the Secretary of Natural Resource (SUHB) Tn. Hj. Halim Nayan and his entourage made a similar working visit to the Project area to see the overall progress in the field.

The TBSFM Project Operational Committee and all the field staff, acknowledge their sincere appreciation and thanks to the DoF and SUHB, for their continuous supports, advice and encouragement for the improvement of this project.



Map 26.1: Showing the compartments that had been silviculturally treated in TFR (marked as dark green)



The 2 most important and influential men behind the project. The Director of Forestry- Datuk Sam Mannan (right) and SUHB -Tuan Hj. Halim Nayan (above) and their officers made separate working visits to Timimbang-Botitian SFM Project in mid-July 2008



Project Activities

The main objective of this project is to restore Timimbang and Botitian Forest Reserves through:

- Silviculture treatment,
- Rehabilitation,
- Enrichment Planting, and
- Forest Protection

All these efforts are geared towards increasing the productivity of the forest, as well as preserving and improving the biodiversity of the site.

- *Silviculture Treatment*

Approximately 10,456 ha or 92% of the TFR needs silviculture treatment. The purpose of this treatment is to improve the available growing stock (PCT) by releasing the existing natural regeneration and potential crop trees from their direct competitors, such as climbers, climbing bamboos (Wadan) and other pioneer vegetation. This operation is being carried out on a contractual basis and to be supervised by the project's trained field staff.

- *Rehabilitation*

Those areas which are badly degraded, encroached for illegal cultivation, and with very poor regeneration of commercial

timber trees will be rehabilitated. It is estimated that the total area that needs to be restored through restoration planting is approximately 500 ha in TFR. The main purpose of restoration planting is to ensure that the open areas are rapidly covered with trees to prevent further soil erosion and infestation of weed species; as well as enhancing the productivity of the forest.



(Above) Rehabilitation work at Compartment 52 (TFR Part B) on a 69 ha encroached area. Maintenance work (weeding) is carried out by the appointed contractor's workers.



Climber cutting as part of the silviculture activity (above), and the condition of the forest after silviculture treatment (right)





- Enrichment Planting

It is estimated that about 500 hectares or 4 % of the total area of TFR and 200 ha or 1% of BFR, are found to be poorly stocked with natural regeneration. Therefore, these areas are earmarked for enrichment planting with preferred indigenous tree species. The enrichment planting system will be either using single or clustered planting under the canopy of the residual stands, with a specified planting distance.

- Forest Management Plan (FMP) and Annual Work Plan (AWP)

An FMP is being prepared by a team headed by Dr. Robert Ong. It is expected to be completed by June 2009. Once ready, it will be submitted to the DoF for approval.

AWPs will also be developed and executed in accordance with the FMP, during the implementation phase. The AWP implementation will be monitored and reported quarterly. Before the end of the fiscal year, performance will be evaluated against all the planned activities in the AWP and the results will be submitted in the compliance report.

Manpower and Logistics

The overall staff strength in 2008 remains status quo. Two uniform staff were assigned to be stationed at Timimbang on a temporary basis. Their main tasks are to assist in the monitoring of silviculture treatment and other field activities. An additional of 3 IPS graduates were, posted to the TBSFM Project in the later part of December 2008. Two (2) Contract PRAs had their appointments terminated on 31st December 2008, due to poor performance and disciplinary problems. The management feels that in order to keep the momentum of work, there is a dire need to maintain a very high standard of discipline and work ethics amongst the staff. It is earnestly hoped that this project will become the centre of excellence that the department could be proud of.

Under the Heart of Borneo (HoB) funding, the TBSFM project was allocated RM 50000.00 to construct a HoB's field outpost at the Botitian Monitoring Station in December 2008. At the same time 1 (one) unit of 4WD Toyota twin-cab, fitted with a radio call for the purpose of field surveillance and wildlife patrols within the TBSFM and the surrounding Forest Reserve areas, was allocated.



HoB's Field Outpost at Botitian Monitoring Station (left) and One unit 4WD – Toyota double cab, (above)

The procurement of 2 additional generator sets was completed in 2008, that is; (i) 60 KVA genset for Timimbang Base camp, and (ii) 12 KVA genset for Botitian Monitoring Station with a total cost of RM98,600.00. This has improved the working environment, tremendously.

Financial And Physical Achievements In 2008

Silviculture treatment has been initiated in a 1,000-hectare-area in compartments 5, 6, 7 and 8 of TFR (Part A). The job was contracted out to Fresh Mumus Enterprise for a period of one year (until April 2009). The silviculture work was carried out smoothly with better road accessibility within the compartments following the repair of the access road. The compliance report for 2008, reported that the contractor had completed the silviculture operation satisfactorily. The total cost of the silviculture operation in 2008 was RM 344,393.00, (Table 26.1).



Inspecting road maintenance carried out in compartment 6 and 7 to provide easier access for the silviculture team. Inspection led by Deputy Director (Development) – Mr. Fidelis Edwin Bajau, who heads the Manager Committee for the project.

Another major activity initiated in 2008 was restoration planting carried in TFR (Part B), involving 69 hectares of encroached area, by Malsa Corporation S/B. The total cost spent on procurement of seedlings was RM 49,998.60, which was supplied by AY Enterprise, (Table 26.1). The species selected for planting were laran, binuang, pulai bukit, gaharu, sepat, pelajau and kawang.

Boundary survey and demarcation of TFR (Part A and Part B) were contracted out to Jurukur Masa S/B (Part A) and Perunding Teknologi Ukur (Part B). As of December 2008, Jurukur Masa S/B has completed 29.7 km or 55% in Part A, whereas Perunding Teknologi has completed 20.1 km or 60% in Part B. Other activities carried out throughout 2008 include erection of 6 units of iron gates and fixing of signages at all exit and entrance points inside TFR. The main purpose is to prevent poachers and encroachers from entering the forest reserves without approval from the Department.

In March 2008, the Sabah Forestry Department engaged the services of HUTAN (KOCP) to conduct wildlife survey in TFR. The main purpose of this wildlife survey is to collect data on wildlife, the key features found within the project area, to identify the major threats on the wildlife populations and to come up with effective recommendations for the wildlife management and monitoring guidelines, to be incorporated in the FMP.

The overall expenditure incurred since the project inception until December 2008 is RM979,540.49. The detailed costs involved is as shown on Table 26.1.

Table 26.1: Expenditure as of December 2008

Component	Cost (RM)	Remark
Contract work		
Silviculture	344,393.00	Completed
Services		
Wildlife Survey (Timimbang FR & Botittian FR)	17,500.00	Completed
Procurement		
Forest Restoration		
• Purchase of tree seedlings Timimbang FR (Part B)	49,998.60	Delivered
• Generator (2 units)	98,600.00	
• Office stationeries	37,686.00	
• Air conditioners	19,815.00	
• Camera	1,299.00	
• Value added Processing & Enhancement spot images	9,996.00	
• First Aid	494.10	
• Garlon (To poison oil palms)	1,105.00	
Maintenance		
• Office	19,680.00	Completed
• Road	14,190.00	
• Staff Quarters	40,272.70	
• Office stationeries	141,567.50	
• Generator	46,040.00	
• Lighting	2,460.00	
• Tree seedlings	49,680.00	
• Erecting Iron gates	28,300.00	
• Signages and FD Plates	48,000.00	
Wages and Allowances		
Allowances	8,463.59	
Grand Total	979,540.49	

Forest Protection And Enforcement

Forest Protection and Enforcement is an important component in this project. This includes putting up signages and FD plates at strategic locations and destroying and poisoning of illegal oil palm by field staff at TFR (Part B). In addition, continuous prevention by patrolling is carried during weekends, public holidays and at night. Iron gates at 6 old entrance and exit points to and from TFR have been installed, to prevent illegal hunters and encroachers entering into the forest reserves.

Under the HoB initiative, the Botitian Monitoring Station has been chosen to be a field outpost. It is hoped that with the availability of such a station at site, patrol teams can be deployed more frequently. Joint night patrols and road blocks can be conducted more often between, the Forestry Department and Sabah Wildlife Department to deter poachers from entering the forest reserves. The HoB 4WD twin cab vehicle which is equipped with a set of radio call, is of much help to the enforcement team.

Other preventive measures that have been outlined to mitigate further encroachment and poaching inside the forest reserves include:

- Erecting and fixing of FD plates along the forest reserves boundary,
- Selected FD staff to undergo training in wildlife protection,
- To carry out general public awareness campaigns among the local communities and surrounding oil palm planters.
- Incorporating a wildlife monitoring plan into the Forest Management Plan.

It is believed that at least 200 ha of TFR Part A has been encroached by the surrounding oil palm estates. Investigation into this case is still on-going and, appropriate actions will be taken once the case is concluded.



Iron gates erected at strategic locations inside TFR



Putting up FD plates along the forest reserve boundary done by the project field staff