

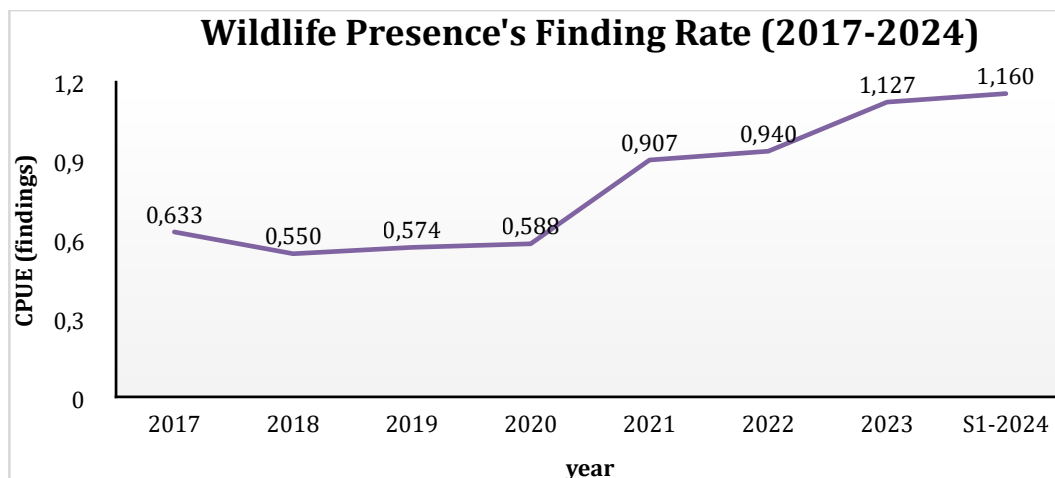
Supporters Update for Rainforest Rescue
FKL Stories from the Field
July 2024

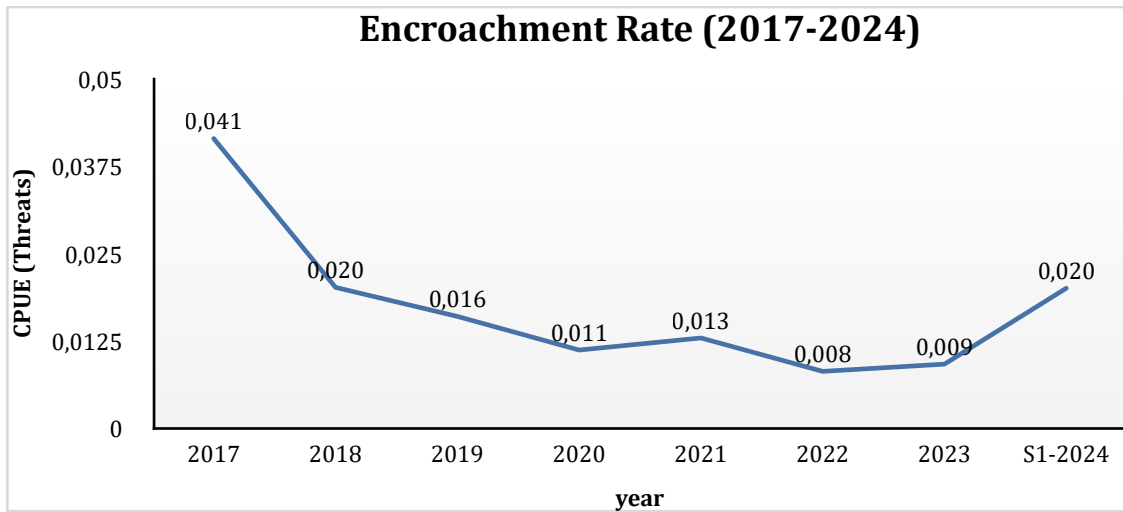
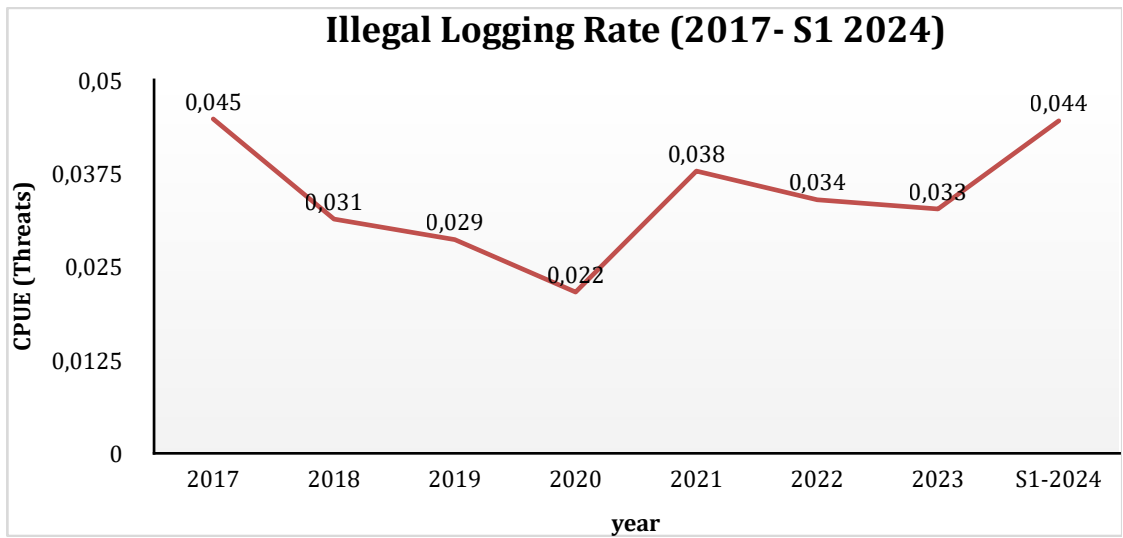
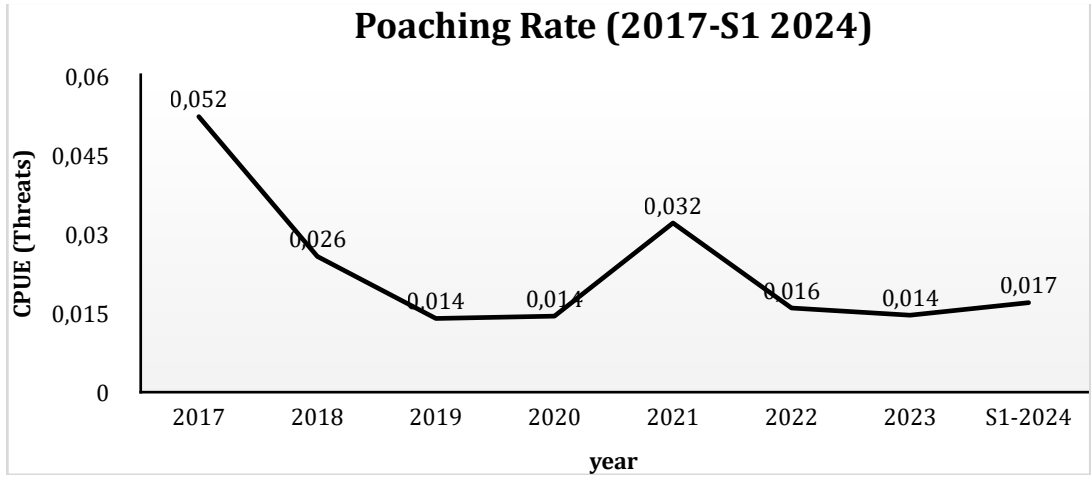
Rainforest Rescue contributes to the deployment of one of 38 Wildlife Protection Teams under FKL to protect the Leuser Ecosystem in Aceh province. The ranger teams patrol for a minimum of 15 days in the forest to detect and deter illegal forest activities and to record data of wildlife findings, especially of Leuser's four key species: the Sumatran rhino, tiger, elephant and orangutan.

Protection progress in the Leuser Ecosystem

In analysing the trend in 2017-2023, we observe both negative and positive trends. Illegal logging continues to pose a significant threat. The increase in the rate for the first half of 2024 underscores the need for intensified efforts to protect forest resources. Although there was a slight increase in the poaching rate in early 2024, it remains much lower than the peak year of 2017, reflecting the impact of our ongoing anti-poaching efforts.

In a more positive trend, encounters with wildlife by our patrol teams have been steadily increasing, indicating a healthier ecosystem and successful conservation measures. In addition, the encroachment rate for the first half of 2024 has significantly decreased compared to the same period in 2023.





Two Sumatran tiger poachers intercepted



In Soraya, our team managed to intercept two poachers carrying 10 sling snares for Sumatran tigers in June 2024. The two poachers are local community members from Aceh Selatan district. The poachers were escorted out from the forest area and brought to Subdistrict Police HQ to be investigated by the authorities.



Stepping Up to Uncover Illegal Wildlife Trade Network

FKL was invited to attend the "Operation Shell Game" meeting in Pattaya, Thailand, from 6-8 June 2024, organized by the USFWS Thailand office. It was the first time that FKL was invited, and we are the only representative from Indonesia. The meeting was a follow-up to the capture of a major player in the illegal wildlife trade, involving law enforcement officials from multiple countries, including Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Korea, Hong Kong, Peru, and Madagascar. The primary objectives were to exchange the latest information on cross-border wildlife trade, and strengthen collaboration among international law enforcement agencies.

Wild orangutans came back to the restored landscape

For our restoration programs, the funding support from Rainforest Rescue has been strategically reallocated to Aunan Village in Ketambe subdistrict, Aceh Tenggara. This decision was made in response to significant challenges faced at the Babahrot

Restoration site, where continuous encroachment and illegal land deals—exacerbated by new road development—proved difficult to overcome, despite the area's official designation as a State Forest.

Aunan Village, directly bordering the forest and the National Park, presents a unique landscape of dense forest canopy interspersed with cultivated fields. The proximity of this village to high-biodiversity and sensitive forest areas has intensified pressures on the National Park as the community strives to meet their needs and secure their livelihoods. However, this delicate location also underscores the need for careful guidance in land management, particularly for those villagers who have already begun farming within the National Park boundaries.

To address this, FKL has taken proactive steps to facilitate collaboration between local farmers and the TNGL (Gunung Leuser National Park) authorities. By employing an agroforestry approach under the Conservation Forest Farmer Group scheme (KTHK), the initiative aims to restore degraded lands while educating the community on sustainable land use practices that align with National Park management objectives. This collaborative effort is crucial not only for the preservation of the National Park but also for fostering a symbiotic relationship between the local community and their environment.

Thanks to the unwavering support from Rainforest Rescue, FKL has successfully distributed and planted 6,634 seedlings over 34.24 hectares during this period. The reforestation efforts in the Aunan Sepakat restoration site have been carried out in partnership with the KTHK Air Terjun and KTHK Gunung Setan Conservation Forest Farmer Groups, which together comprise 60 male and 5 female farmers. This initiative not only aims to restore the land but also to provide sustainable livelihoods for 65 families, helping them preserve their environment while securing their future.

Our GIS team has conducted an analysis of drone imagery captured over the Aunan restoration landscape, comparing data from 2020 to 2023. The results reveal significant improvements in land use trends within Aunan, with areas once dominated by corn and mixed plantations transitioning into bushes and secondary forest. These positive changes highlight the effectiveness of the restoration efforts and the potential for long-term ecological recovery.

We are also delighted to share the pictures below, showcasing Sumatran orangutans thriving in the Aunan Sepakat restoration site, a success story supported by Rainforest Rescue. During the durian harvesting season, these magnificent creatures have been spotted enjoying the fruits, a sight that underscores the importance of these restored habitats. However, this positive development also brings a new concern for local farmers, who fear that an increase in orangutan visits might reduce their profits. Balancing the needs of wildlife and local communities remains a priority as we continue to work towards a sustainable and harmonious coexistence.







