



Alliance for Tompotika Conservation Aliansi Konservasi Tompotika

NEWSLETTER

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New Tompotika Rainforest Preserve Moving Forward

As we go to press, the legal process and paperwork establishing ALTO's new Tompotika Forest Preserve is underway. Happily for this effort and for conservation in general, new Indonesian national "green" initiatives are helping the new preserve gain high-level political support, and villagers are enthusiastic about the accompanying community-based programs for organic farming, buffer-zone reforestation, and ecotourism.

But we still need your help. Just how much of sacred Mount Tompotika's pristine forests are included in the new preserve--whether 2000, 10,000, or 25,000 acres--will depend on how much support we can garner for these globally-important forests from those around the globe who benefit from their existence. To become a "shareholder" in the new forest preserve and help ensure a future of abundant wildlife, clean water, and a stable climate for all, please see newsletter insert inside...



Robin Moore

The new Tompotika Forest Preserve is a haven for amphibians like this tiny frog.

Sea Turtles:

How Do We Know It's Working?

How do you change people's minds? How do you invite them to see things in a new way? How do you touch their hearts? And perhaps most importantly, how does all that translate into a different way of acting in the world? In Tompotika, how do we encourage ordinary folks to shift from illegally poaching sea turtles for their meat, eggs, or shells—and causing their decline toward extinction—to protecting and appreciating them for their beauty, ecosystem services, tourism appeal, and intrinsic worth? If this Shift doesn't happen—via slow-rising tide or tipping point, starting now or starting yesterday—the decline and disappearance of sea turtles from Tompotika is inevitable. Repeat the barren scenario in a few dozen more places around the world, and a sea turtle species vanishes from the earth forever.

Or, help to build a different scenario. Several years back, conservationists in the Caribbean facilitated The Shift among local people there, protecting nesting beaches and preventing poaching, and since then, Caribbean sea turtle populations have been recovering. We, the alliance of Tompotikans and others that is ALTO, started out last year with the goal of facilitating The Shift in Tompotika, and helping to build a network that would make it happen all over Indonesia, epicenter of world biodiversity. Our sea turtle conservation program pairs vil-



Robin Moore

Taima villager Roma has hung ALTO's sea turtle poster on the wall of his hut and decorated it with a garland made of plastic fruit cups.

... someone noticed human activity on an uninhabited island just offshore... a man had captured 26 live green turtles and was preparing... them for market.

lage-based, in-the-field turtle and nest protection strategies with a traveling Awareness Campaign that reaches out to schoolchildren and villagers all over Tompotika. We know we have already protected over 125 turtle mothers and more than 10,000 eggs. But how are we doing with encouraging The Shift among villagers? The following story gives us a clue.

One day last November in the village of Taima, where ALTO had previously been doing field and Awareness work for sea turtles, someone noticed human

activity on an uninhabited island just offshore. Before ALTo began conservation work with these villagers, they had routinely poached turtle meat and eggs whenever they could find them. Now, however, as ALTo partners with a new-found concern for turtle conservation, they took canoes to the island to find out what was going on. On the island, they found a man who had captured 26 live green turtles and was preparing to butcher them for market. The villagers protested, informing the man that sea turtles are protected, and citing the pertinent Indonesian law—the law which is printed at the bottom of ALTo’s sea turtle awareness poster, which some of them have memorized. The man ignored them, noting that he had hunted turtles all his life.



Olive Ridley Turtle hatchling

Noval Suling

But the villagers were undaunted. When the man refused to cooperate, they returned to the mainland and, lacking formal authorities in their own village, sent

The villagers... sent messengers on a motorbike three villages away to track down a policeman.

messengers on a motorbike three villages away to track down a policeman. When found, the policeman also shrugged off news of the turtle

capture—he, he too likes to eat turtle meat! But the villagers again cited the law on the poster, and insisted that the policeman accompany them to the island and enforce the law. Unable to refuse, the policeman did indeed join them, and they reached the island in time to release 25 of the turtles back into the wild—one turtle had already been butchered. The villagers returned to their village triumphant in their new-found role as turtle protectors—and the policeman later joked that he’s now enforcing laws he never knew existed!

Taima villagers have so taken the turtle conservation message to heart that they are protecting turtles even without ALTo staff or visitors being present.

In learning about this incident after the fact, what we at ALTo are most proud of is that *we weren’t even there*—Taima villagers have so taken the turtle conservation message to heart that they are protecting turtles even without ALTo staff or visitors being present. Is it working? Is The Shift occurring? That’s one way we know.

Art for Conservation: the Tompotika Youth Calendar Project

A winning combination: art, conservation, and young talent. Although Tompotika children are fortunate to have simple school-buildings and a government program which sponsors their school fees, these schools focus only on the “3R’s.” For an artistically-inclined young person, there is no support, training, or materials to develop artistic expression. Until now. This August, ALTo is sponsoring an 8-day Art for Conservation workshop which will provide 8 days of intensive training for 12 talented Tompotika high schoolers. In the workshop, these 12 students will receive special instruction in techniques for drawing and painting from nature from U.S. professional wildlife artist and experienced art teacher Sandra Noel.

They will also receive instruction in ecology and conservation basics concerning their uniquely biodiverse region. Students will practice drawing fur, feathers, leaves, sand, and other subjects from nature, and each student will choose



Maleo and turtle nesting beach in Taima, Tompotika by ALTo Conservation Officer Ritfan Djano

one of Tompotika’s endangered wildlife species to feature in a culminating piece of artwork, the final picture. At the end of the workshop, the 12 final pictures will be assembled to create a 2010 12-month calendar which will be printed on recycled paper and distributed free throughout Tompotika to help celebrate the area’s wildlife and natural heritage, and the young artists who have brought them to life.

Why a calendar? In Tompotika, most people generally only have calendars during election years, when political candidates distribute free self-promotional calendars; these, whether attractive or not, are widely seen because they are useful. However, 2010 is not an election year in Tompotika, and therefore without receiving them from some other source, most people simply will not have calendars. The Art for Conservation Youth Calendars, therefore, are expected to be widely used and appreciated throughout the year. In addition, a number



Sulawesi Dwarf Kingfisher, by Sandra Noel

of the calendars (which will be bilingual, in Indonesian and English) will be made available for sale in the U.S. to help support ALTo’s conservation work.

Meet our Indonesian Board

AITo is an international partnership of a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with a US Board and a registered *Yayasan* non-governmental organization in Indonesia. In Indonesia, *Yayasans* are governed by a board of directors, or *Dewan Pembina*, as well as an overseer of accountability (especially financial), or *Pengawas*. AITo's five *Dewan Pembina* members and one *Pengawas* are all highly-respected Indonesian conservation professionals with long experience in conservation organizations and projects (left to right, above):



Titayanto Pieter, *Program Development Manager, Tahija Foundation, Jakarta*

Nenny Babo, *Community Organizer, Makassar*

Dr. Djoko Iskandar, *Professor and Head of Senate, Institute of Technology, Bandung*

Dr. Tiene Gunawan, *Marine Policy Advisor, Conservation International Indonesia, Bogor*

Dr. John Tasirin, *Professor, Sam Ratulangi University, and Sulawesi Program Manager, Wildlife Conservation Society, Manado*

not pictured: **Dr. Iwan Gunawan**, *Program Director, The World Bank, Bogor*



Robin Moore

Some of us may take reading for granted. But 76-year-old Ibu had not been able to read for years, since her eyesight grew hazy with normal aging. Now, with the new reading glasses AITo is providing as a community benefit for conservation villages, Ibu can see clearly again.

Keeping You Informed, and AITo Fed

As AITo nears its third birthday, we have so much news to share that it no longer fits on a single sheet of paper. Because you are the Ones Who Have Made AITo Possible, we want you to hear the news and stories and see the pictures - and we want to deliver it all in a way that is consistent with our values. Paper? E-mail? How often? What kind? Based on our deliberations on these questions, here's what you can expect going forward:

- Unless you tell us you'd prefer electronic only, you will receive 2-3 printed AITo newsletters each year. Like all our materials, they'll be printed on 100% post-consumer recycled or other sustainably-produced paper (reclaimed, FSC-certified, etc.). You will receive them in the mail, and can read them when and where you wish - no equipment or electricity required. We hope you enjoy them! Special thanks to Claire Bronson for her expert design assistance.
- In addition to the regular newsletters, starting in July we'll be sending monthly e-mail updates to share additional news and stories. If we have an e-mail address on file for you, we will automatically add you to this distribution list unless you unsubscribe.
- Along with our newsletters, we will enclose a letter twice a year to ask your financial support for AITo. We won't send six reminders, we won't offer you address labels or a plush toy, and we won't turn around and send a new appeal letter the minute we receive your donation. But we do ask you to carefully examine your giving, and give generously, in line with your values. If you do that, AITo will have enough.
- To tell us your newsletter preferences, change your contact details, or make a donation, see the enclosed letter, or contact us at the address below. (Please note our new e-mail address.)

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The Maleo: an Evolutionarily Distinct and Globally Endangered Treasure

There are—alas!—many endangered species in the world. But some of them are more evolutionarily distinct than others—meaning that these species are so unique, so unlike their cousins and neighbors, that if they disappear, an entire chapter of the earth's evolution—an entire branch of the Tree of Life—disappears with them. Sulawesi's maleo bird is such an evolutionarily distinct One and Only, and AlTo is proud to be playing a central role in the maleo's recovery. Since working with the local Tompotika community to secure protection for one of earth's last, best maleo nesting grounds in 2006, AlTo has helped to ensure that over 3500 maleo eggs have been saved from poaching and allowed to hatch. That's pretty significant when the entire global population of maleos is estimated at only 5000-8000. Before AlTo got involved, virtually every egg was poached; now this key maleo population is recovering, and Tompotikans are taking a new-found pride in their local mascot.

Thanks to your help... that protection is expanding to create a network of safe nesting areas and forest habitats for maleos all over Sulawesi.

But there's more. We cannot save the maleo from extinction by protecting just one site. So AlTo has joined with a small band of other maleo conservation projects in other parts of the island of Sulawesi to organize an island-wide maleo conservation initiative, which will reach out to new villages and help them initiate new maleo protection projects, using AlTo's community-based model. Thanks to your help, AlTo's premiere maleo conservation project near the village of Taima, Tompotika, continues to protect more maleos than any other effort on earth. Now, that protection is expanding to create a network of safe nesting areas and forest habitats for maleos all over Sulawesi.

The maleo, always and forever, will be evolutionarily distinct. But we're working toward the day when it is no longer endangered.

♻️ This newsletter is printed on 100% post-consumer recycled paper.



Lithograph of a maleo (*Macrocephalon maleo*) from *Lloyd's Natural History of Game Birds*, 1896