



Alliance for Tompotika Conservation Aliansi Konservasi Tompotika

NEWSLETTER

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Ibu-Ibu:

Field trips for women introduce them to their maleo neighbors

Since 2006, ALTo has been working closely with the people of Taima village to protect the maleo nesting ground located in their jurisdiction. However, most of the decision-makers in that village, and most of the people who attend public meetings for discussion or input, are male. Thus, if hearing from and understanding the concerns of *all* members of the village is one of our goals (and it is!), it's essential to make special outreach efforts toward women. Accordingly, in recent months ALTo staff have hosted a series of informational sessions and field trips designed, timed, and organized particularly for women. Through these events, women have come together in neighborhood groups (*continued on p. 2*)



Pandji Kresno

"Look--so many birds!" Through ALTo's field trips, women of Taima village were able to observe maleos from behind a viewing blind. For many, it was their first sighting of a maleo ever, and the experience left them excited and curious. "Do they really lay their eggs in that sand? How deep?"

We Bought the Beach! **Land purchase creates brand-new wild-life preserve for maleos and sea turtles**

The past year in Tompotika has been a spectacular one for the maleo bird, an iconic endangered species and an ambassador for all conservation in Sulawesi. In late 2018, we reported that ALTo's flagship maleo nesting ground, the Libuun site near Taima village, had counted a record 108 birds at one time--a four-fold increase since protection began in 2006. Then in April 2019, we reported that maleo visits at ALTo's second site, Kaumosongi, where protection efforts began in late 2014, had increased 149%--more than double--since that program began.

Now we have a third maleo triumph to report: the Panganian nesting ground site, which ALTo learned about in 2018, has just been purchased by ALTo, ensuring that this beautiful patch of beach and forest will be permanently protected as a new sanctuary for maleos, sea turtles, and other imperiled Sulawesi wildlife.

The new site, which encompasses 6.7 ha (~17 acres) bounded by coral-rich ocean on one side and government-owned forested land on the other, is the fifth natural area ALTo has permanently protected through purchase or by facilitating official government designation. About 6 km (~4 mi) from ALTo's flagship nesting ground at Taima-Libuun, the two nesting sites connect to the same large area of natural forest, where maleos live when not on the nesting ground. The addition of this new site is critical, because endangered species recovery is not secure without multiple safe locations.

At Panganian, there are large stretches of coconut plantations nearby, but permanent human residents in the area are few. According to locals, both maleo and sea turtle populations have declined significantly at the Panganian site; a decade or two ago, they report, hundreds of sea turtles hauled up to nest each season on the quiet beaches, while dozens (*continued on p. 3*)



Sandhy Bawotong

They use the same beaches. Sea turtles climb up to nest above the high tide line on this Panganian beach while, behind the line of trees, an open space hosts nesting by maleo birds. Both species lay their eggs in a hole dug in the sand, and in both species, the young hatch, emerge from the sand, and make their way to the ocean (turtles) and forest (maleos) to grow up, independent of any parental care.

Outreach to women (continued from p.1)

to learn and share about why and how conservation of the endangered maleo is so important, to their village and to the world. Then, AITo provided transportation to the nearby nesting ground so they could see these marvelous birds directly.

The maleos are their own best ambassadors. Though this bird has been a hot topic of discussion in Taima since 2006, only by actually seeing and "meeting" the bird directly can it truly come alive to people--not as an object, not as a symbol, but as a living, breathing neighbor that they can love and be proud of. ~



Pandji Kresno

"I didn't know they were protected by law." Women gathered in their neighborhoods for information and discussion about maleos in advance of their visits to the nesting ground.

The Alliance for Tompotika Conservation/ Aliansi Konservasi Tompotika ("AITo") is dedicated to conserving the unparalleled natural and cultural heritage of the lands and waters of the Tompotika Peninsula, Sulawesi, Indonesia. Effective, creative, and efficient, AITo protects endangered species, tropical rainforests, and coral reefs while promoting the dignity and self-sufficiency of local communities in a changing world. In Tompotika and everywhere, AITo believes that the quality of our human lives is bound up to the health of our natural environment and our relationships to it.

AITo is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization in the United States and a registered Yayasan in Indonesia, made possible by your donations. Thank you for your support!

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Field Update: Maleo Survey nearly complete

Thanks to AITo and community efforts, the maleo is recovering in Tompotika. But if this marvelous bird is to avoid extinction in the long term, it must have other safe places to live and breed. The AITo team has thus been undertaking a comprehensive survey of virtually all of 150+ nesting sites where maleos have been known to breed historically, across all of Sulawesi. Now nearly complete, that survey is confirming our fears: the maleo has declined drastically in recent decades. But there is also plenty of hope: with our work in Tompotika, we now know how to recover maleo populations, and with the survey information, we'll know where to go next. Stay tuned! ~



Pandji Kresno

Roads, Rivers, Rain, Remote! Many historic maleo nesting sites have taken hours or days for the survey team to reach. Sadly, a majority have been wiped out.

Wish List: Your old binoculars

Got a beautiful new pair of binoculars for your birthday? Upgrading in honor of your growing birding skills? Just want to help the next generation fall in love with Nature? Please send us your unneeded, working binoculars!

As reported in the last (Apr '19) AITo Newsletter, AITo collaborator and birding expert Nurlin Djuni (www.mali-abirding.com), a resident of earthquake- and tsunami-torn Palu, Central Sulawesi, has been helping to heal young people and children traumatized by the disaster by bringing them out into Nature and teaching them birding skills. But they currently only have one or two poor, foggy pairs of binoculars to share between dozens of new birders. Your donation of working binoculars can make an immediate, dramatic difference in helping to bring a sense of peace and security to these folks while also building in their hearts a deep love and knowledge of Nature.

Love and respect for the Nature of which we're a part is the key to our planet's future; it's what's desperately needed in Indonesia; it can also heal human hearts from trauma. Just think: your old binoculars can be a vehicle for all that!

To donate, contact AITo (see left). Collection locations in the USA, Australia, or UK can be arranged. *Terima kasih* -- thank you! ~



Iwan Londo

New Wildlife Preserve (continued from p.1)

of maleos visited daily to lay their eggs. Like virtually everywhere else, however, these eggs were routinely poached, in this case often by fishermen stopping briefly to dig sea turtle or maleo nests as they passed by. As a result, today only small numbers of maleos and sea turtles survive here. But it's not too late! AITo's experience at the Libuun and Kaumosongi sites demonstrates that, as long as the birds are not wiped out completely, decisive action to stop poaching can and does lead to maleo recovery; likewise, controlling poaching of sea turtle eggs can also lead to their recovery, though this can take many years due to sea turtles' slow maturation to adulthood.

Purchase of the Panganian site required complicated negotiations with four separate landowners over five parcels of land. The process took nearly a year, and was successful in large part thanks

to the assistance of AITo partner Yudil Dilao. Yudil, a resident of the village nearby and a former poacher himself, became interested in conservation several years ago when AITo hired him as a forest guide; since then he has become one of AITo's keenest conservation advocates.

The land purchase, which was made possible by the IUCN-Netherlands, International Conservation Fund of Canada, and your generous donations, is only the beginning. In the time ahead, the AITo team will need to erect signs and fencing; establish a monitoring program; and work to achieve permanent protection for the adjacent forest. But with this move, it's clear: though still in decline elsewhere, in Tompotika the endangered maleo has a safe stronghold, and is in recovery. *Terima kasih!* Your support has made a difference!~



Sandhy Bawotong

The work begins. The AITo team clears brush to make more room for maleo nesting. Next steps will include efforts to achieve permanent protection for the adjacent native forest, just outside the photo to the right.



Sandhy Bawotong

A place of peace. The new preserve will offer a safe haven and key nesting area for both marine and terrestrial wildlife.

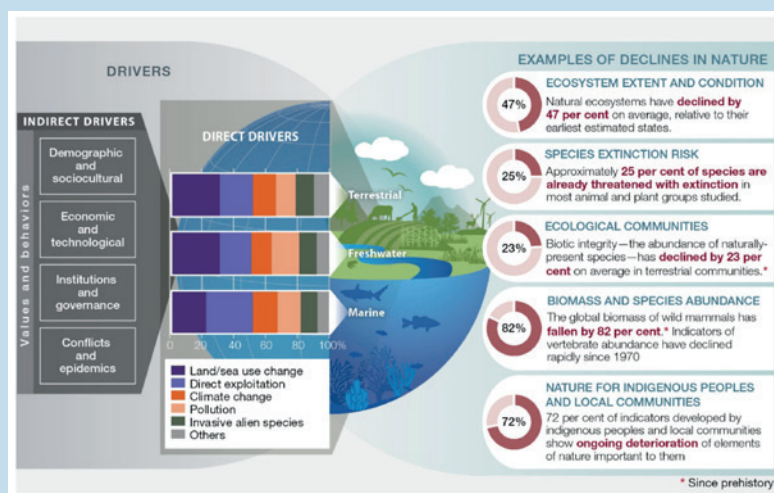
The IPBES Global Assessment: What do we need to do to save the world?

We have all heard news stories reporting it in various forms, but the bottom line is that Nature--the biodiversity, ecosystem functions, and services that sustain all life on planet Earth--is deteriorating faster than at any point since humans have been around. Sometimes this knowledge can seem overwhelming, leading to a sense of helplessness, denial, or numb business-as-usual pursuit of our habits. Yet, understanding, when coupled with care, can lead to empowerment.

In May, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), a highly-respected international team of science and policy experts, released its summary report on the human relationship with the rest of Nature, and, to no-one's surprise, the indicators are not good. However, much of the report focuses on how to make them better, and the good news is that with what IPBES calls "transformative change" in human societies, a much brighter future for Earth's entire biosphere--**including** a much higher quality of human life--is possible.

The actions called for in the IPBES report, such as "enhanced international cooperation and linked locally-relevant measures," a focus on "values," "expand and effectively manage the current network of protected areas," and much more, reads like a catalogue of how the AITo team approaches our work. If transformative change can save the world, why not start right here, right now, to create it? ~

Read the full IPBES summary report at: www.IPBES.net



Understanding how human activities are causing Nature's decline. Human values and behaviors shape Indirect Drivers, such as human demographic and sociocultural patterns (e.g. population growth and consumption), which feed Direct Drivers, such as land conversion and hunting/fishing. These in turn affect terrestrial, freshwater, and marine habitats variably, and the resulting declines in Nature can be seen through indices such as decline in ecosystems, species extinction, and reduced availability of Nature for people who depend on it at the subsistence level. (Source: IPBES)



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The Faces of ALTo: Kathryn and Jackoustik: a gift of love made manifest

Sandhy Bawotong



"If we care... Come let's protect our Nature." Soloists, small groups, and a larger choir have all come together to write and sing of their love of Nature. It's *growing*.

waking up, and taking care, and audiences of over 3000 have been entertained, impressed, and moved by the medium, the messengers, and the message. As Kathryn puts it, there is "almost another level of communication under the music that connect[s] everybody...more closely with the mission of protecting species and the environment in general." And the power endures. In the same way that Kathryn's gift is making a legacy of love for Nature and music carry on after Jack's death, so after previous Jackoustik festivals, audience members have been heard humming the tunes weeks later.

You can help ensure that the joyful power of Jackoustik continues in 2020. To help celebrate Nature through music, or to honor Jack, please mark "Jackoustik" on your check, or let us know with an e-mail when you give online at www.tompotika.org. ~

Sometimes, even through heartache, you just know what you have to do. "It was so clear that a music-centered festival was the right thing," said Kathryn Sposato, who recently made a generous pledge that will help sponsor ALTo's third "Jackoustik" event. *Jackoustik*--"Jack" + "acoustic" or "*akustik*" in Indonesian, as coined by ALTo staff--is a popular contest that honors Kathryn's late husband Jack and inspires Tompotikans to compose and perform music with a conservation theme.

When Dr. Jack Barbash--scientist, conservationist, musician, husband to Kathryn, and a member of ALTo's U.S. Board--died of cancer in 2015, the world lost one of its brightest spirits. But Jack's friends and family immediately moved to carry on Jack's legacy in a tangible way, establishing the Jackoustik Music for Conservation contest in conjunction with ALTo's biannual Festival.

Jackoustik has so far been held twice, in 2016 and 2018, and, with Kathryn's matching challenge, we hope to raise the \$6000 needed to hold it again in 2020.

Through Jackoustik, over 60 Tompotika musicians have performed songs about mountains, maleos,



Courtesy photo

A passion for Nature, music, and each other. Jack Barbash and Kathryn Sposato shared great loves. Now Kathryn is helping spread them to others.