

Research Activity Report
Supported by “Leading Graduate Program in Primatology and Wildlife Science”
 (Please be sure to submit this report after the trip that supported by PWS.)

	2017. 10, 28
Affiliation/Position	Wildlife Research Center/D2
Name	Nachiketha Sharma

1. Country/location of visit
Bogor and Ujung Kulon National Park (West Java), Indonesia
2. Research project
The 6 th International workshop on Tropical Biodiversity Conservation focusing on large animal studies
3. Date (departing from/returning to Japan)
2017. 10. 15 – 2017. 10. 21 (7days)
4. Main host researcher and affiliation
Department of Biology, FMIPA IPB, Bogor Agriculture University and Prof Shiro Kohshima
5. Progress and results of your research/activity (You can attach extra pages if needed)
Please insert one or more pictures (to be publicly released). Below each picture, please provide a brief description.
<p>The brilliant concept of “Field Museum” project proposed by Prof. Shiro Kohshima attempts to develop or initiate studies and awareness programs on the wild animals in their natural habitats. During the first five years, this project included mainly four different countries (India, Brazil, Malaysia and Japan as a host country). Now for the second leg of the program, three new countries have been added to the list to promote the excellency in research on advanced techniques such as genome analysis, environmental DNA, sound/image analysis, bio-logging, etc. The new members of the projects are Indonesia, China and United Kingdom. All the project heads of different countries, specialized in various aspects of ecology and conservation that provides students a wonderful opportunity and an invaluable exposure to interact, learn and collaborate in various fields.</p> <p>The program also organizes yearly workshops in the partner countries. This time we had an opportunity to participate in one of such workshops and field trips conducted in Bogor and Ujung Kulon National Park, Indonesia.</p> <p>The workshop began from the opening remarks on the concept of ‘field museum’ by Kohshima-sensei. Yumoto-sensei spoke about how Yakushima is a great example of the field museum concept and Prof. Suryobroto gave a talk on possibilities of establishing the field museum in Indonesia.</p> <p>There were several talks on interesting topics such as endocrinology, behavior, human-animal conflicts and connection between the studies in wild and captivity. Personally, I found all the talks very enlightening with two talks being more captivating. One of them was a talk on ‘application of non-invasive techniques in understanding the health of wild populations’ by Dr. Kodzue Kinoshita and the other talk by Prof. Satoshi Hirata on ‘the quest for the origin of human mind’. We also had an opportunity to present our study through poster, which helped me to get scientific reviews and feedback regarding my work.</p> <p>We also had an opportunity to visit Ujung Kulon National Park. After travelling for long hours and distances from Bogor by car followed by boat, we finally reached an Island to observe the world’s one of the most critically endangered mammal-“the Javan Rhinoceros”. Once distributed widely across the South-East Asia, now they are confined to only a tiny part of Indonesia, no greater than the area of 200 sq km. It’s interesting to note that there are reports showing that these rhinos were once found in Sundarbans (eastern part of India). Now, there are only 60 individuals left in the wild. Most of them vanished mainly due to poaching and habitat degradation which are the gifts to the planet Earth by greedy human beings.</p>

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The park ranger in his presentation mentioned about the birth of 4 new calves in recent year which is a good news for the rhino conservation efforts. We also got to learn about the habitats of rhinos and how the park managers are trying to bring back the lost feeding grounds of rhinos. In Taman Jaya, the habitats of rhinos are decimated by the invasive species of palm called “Langkap” (local name). These plants have completely taken over replacing one of the main food “Songgom” which rhino prefer to feed on. We also came to know about the removal projects of palm plants being monitored by forest staff by creating one-hectare sampling plots across Taman Jaya (total 25 of them) to understand the dynamics of the invasive plants. The results are quite promising as the rhinos seem to be using those plots where palms were removed.

We couldn't directly sight the rhinos, however we managed to see the “foot-prints” of the Javan rhinos which made me feel very fortunate. Along with that, we saw Banteng (*Bos javanicus*) wild cattle species and peafowls. Recently, there were reports of sighting of “the Javan Tiger”, believed to be extinct since 30 years. The park managers had videographed a ‘tiger-like’ animal feeding on the carcass of the dead Banteng. But, after a close observation, I personally felt that it could be a leopard.

We had lots of discussions on conservation-related issues and personally for me, it was a great learning experience. This trip was a very unique and had left wonderful remarks on my mind and memory.



Fig 1: Trekking through the forest



Fig 2: Foot-print of the Javan rhinoceros

6. Others

My sincere gratitude to Kohshiana-sensei for giving me an opportunity to participate in the trip. I would like to thank CET-Bio and PWS for supporting the trip. Also, thanks and cheers to all the organizers and participants of the workshop for making this a memorable one.