



*Embassy of the United States of America
Jakarta*

March 24, 2016

Mr. Ariyan Kalami
C/O Ms. Cristin Reichmuth
Moreland Middle School
4600 Student Lane
San Jose, CA 95130

Dear Ariyan,

Thank you for your letter dated November 20, 2015, which we received at the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia, on March 24, 2016. The Ambassador read your letter with interest and asked me to respond to you as I cover climate change and forestry issues including wildlife. By way of background, I've served here for nearly four years and have spent a considerable amount of time in Sumatra. I've seen many charismatic species including Sumatran rhinos and Sumatran elephants in Indonesia's national parks. Fortunately, I haven't seen Sumatran tigers up close in the wild, but I've worked with the Ministry of Environment and Forestry and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to help protect them.

In reading your letter, I can tell that you have researched this topic quite well. You're correct that the Sumatran Tiger is an endangered species, yet is also the second largest tiger population in the world. Poor road planning and encroachment (human development in formerly wild areas) in Sumatra leads to human-animal conflict as the tigers follow the roads to settlements and if a person is hurt, the animal is usually killed. Also, as you note, tigers are poached for their valuable hides and bones that purportedly infuse traditional tonics with invigorative and magical properties. As you can see, protecting iconic species requires a multi-faceted approach: capacity building of law enforcement, enhanced conservation, and public awareness campaigns to reduce the demand for wildlife products.

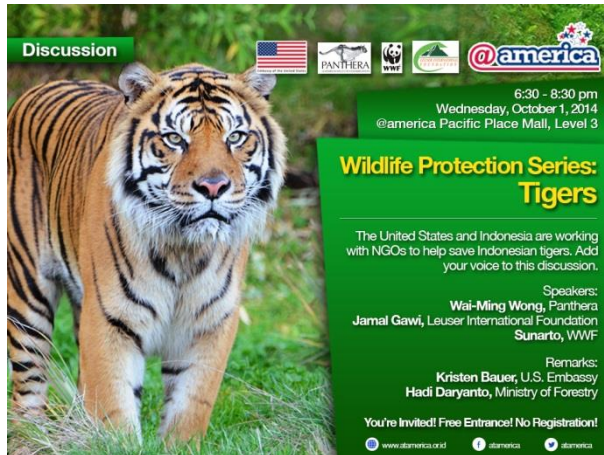
I'd like to share some information with you about what the United States government is doing in collaboration with the Government of Indonesia to preserve wildlife. I'll highlight some things that I've been personally involved with to give you a flavor of my work that illustrates what we are doing day-to-day to advance U.S. policies – and combatting climate change and protecting wildlife are priorities for our government and principles that I believe in personally. In fact, when I was nine years old, I wrote letters to another country's embassy in Washington asking them to stop harpooning whales! So I commend you for your initiative and encourage you to continue to find a way to be involved by volunteering, informing your peers, and making the right choices yourself.

As a small and practical example of advancing conservation, in 2014, we donated 50 "camera traps" to a local NGO for monitoring of remote tiger populations and detection of poachers in Sumatra. We then met with the national park head (an Indonesian government official) to obtain his permission for the NGO to emplace the cameras in the national park. In that same year, Secretary of State John Kerry came to Jakarta and signed a Memorandum of Understanding to



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Protect Wildlife and Combat Wildlife Trafficking with the Indonesian government. The U.S. Department of Justice has conducted training for investigators and prosecutors. And, working with the U.S. Department of the Treasury under the Congressionally authorized Tropical Forest Conservation Act (TFCA), we negotiated an additional \$12 million specifically to conserve tropical forest wildlife habitat in Sumatra. We conducted outreach programs to university students including a program specifically on the Sumatran tiger. And the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) started a \$50 million program that over the next five years will improve forest management in Indonesia including wildlife conservation.



Alone, it's not enough but others are engaged, too. Together, we can make a difference. And that's what I enjoy about my work. I hope that this has addressed your question and I welcome any follow-up.

Sincerely,

Gordon S. Church
Foreign Service Officer
U.S. Department of State