



TANE' OLEN SETULANG

Omens of the Isij Bird for the Oma Lung Tribe

A tradition of forest conservation at Setulang Village, Malinau, North Kalimantan





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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1 The Oma Lung Tribe's Epic Exodus	10
Origins of the Oma Lung Tribe	12
Rice is More Valuable Than the Threat of the Tiger	12
Tane' Olen, a Tribute to the Faren	14
Tane' Olen as a Biological Resource Bank	15
Battling the Currents for Salt	16
Lutu Rema, Belated Awakening	18
The Isij Bird's Omen for Setulang	18
Arduous Emigration	20
A Piece of Forest for Everyone	22
Adjang Lidem at Oma Setulang	23
CHAPTER 2 Setulang and Tane' Olen	26
Land Use Based on Customary Wisdom	30
Cultivation Follows Nature's Signs	32
Awareness of Protected Forest	39
A Challenging Phase for Protected Forest	41
Kalpataru, Returning to the Tane' Olen	43
Making a Livelihood from the Tane' Olen	45
CHAPTER 3 Striving to Return to the Forest's Nature	54
Ecological Politics of the Oma Lung Tribe	56
The Concerns of the Oma Lung Tribe and the International Community	59
The Village Forest, a New Solution to Forest Tenure Conflict	62
The First Village Forest in North Kalimantan	65
The Road to Tane' Olen Ecotourism	65
Challenges of an Ecotourism Village	68
Tane' Olen and the Village Economy	70
Tane' Olen for the Younger Generation	71
Tane' Olen in the Future	72
Bibliography	77
Maps of Setulang Village and Tane' Olen	78

FOREWORD

The Technical Cooperation module of the Forests and Climate Change Programme (FORCLIME) is implemented by the Indonesian Ministry of Environment and Forestry and German Gesellschaft für International Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and funded by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). Within its scope of inputs, which are aimed at the sustainable management of forests under different ownerships, FORCLIME has been supporting Community Based Forest Management (CBFM) related activities in the village of Setulang for a number of years.

During our cooperation, the residents of the village offered a broader perspective and showed us that that sustainable development at the local level needs to be based on relevant experience and should take the aspirations of the community into consideration. We are convinced that the incorporation of local wisdom into the sustainable management of forest resources is a fundamental factor underlying the success of the programme, not only in the village of Setulang but also in other areas.

This book sets out the true and remarkable story of the Oma Lung community and its rich history, it describes aspects of their cultural heritage and sketches out a portrait of Setulang people's ways and perspectives as regards forest conservation. FORCLIME got involved in the development of *Tane' Olen Setulang - Perdana Burung Isij bagi Suku Oma Lung* in order to support the Adat community through the addressing of a wider audience and the sharing of Setulang's vibrant tradition of forest conservation. It is hoped that this book will be able to contribute to the documenting and sharing of local experiences and knowledge with a wide range of stakeholders.

Our approach has been a highly participatory one involving the gathering of large amounts of information, alongside many discussions and back-and-forth communications. We would like to express our gratitude to all of our resource personnel for revealing their experiences to us. Our appreciation also goes out to the writer of this book, Ibu Johanna Ernawati, who has arranged the stories contained within into such an enjoyable read. We hope that this book will inspire readers, foresters and non-foresters alike to follow the example set by the Oma Lung community and to preserve their local wisdom so that it will become the foundation and basic power that underlies the sustainable management of their forests.

Jakarta, November 2017



Georg Buchholz
FORCLIME Program Director

FOREWORD

The Setulang community would like to express its gratitude to God for the completion of this book: *Tane' Olen Setulang – Omens of the Isij Bird for the Oma Lung Tribe*. We would also like to thank FORCLIME for its willingness to document the experiences and wisdom of our ancestors as regards sustainable forest management.

It is a great blessing that we have been made aware of the journey and struggles of our ancestors in their efforts to live harmoniously with the environment and the surrounding communities. All this time, we, the younger generations, were able to see but not truly see and hear but not truly hear. *Tane' Olen Setulang – Omens of the Isij Bird for the Oma Lung Tribe* has allowed us to revisit the stories of our ancestors' struggles, which we no longer experience in our daily lives, especially the young generation of the Setulang Tourist Village who do not live directly next to the forest anymore. We hope that this book can offer a precious window onto the past, the present and the future of our home.

We, the Oma Lung Tribe at Setulang, are farmers who live around the Tane' Olen forest, which supplies the majority of our daily needs, including drinking water, protein and medicine. We realize that we still need to learn more about forest management, both through the local wisdom of our ancestors and from modern scientific knowledge. Our ancestors have reaped great benefits from the forest and have taken advantage of the forest sustainably. Thus, we have good reason to fight for the Tane' Olen forest through the legal forest governance system of the Republic of Indonesia.


It has become a challenge for us, the younger generation, and for the Setulang Tourist Village government, to continue this fight and to continue to define the role of the Tane' Olen forest in our lives. As an authority of the Setulang Tourist Village government, we understand the pressure as well as the need for the community to live prosperously without sacrificing the Tane' Olen Setulang forest. Our challenge is to bring prosperity to the community while conserving this ancient forest. Due to our limitations, partnerships with several parties have been forged, including our ongoing partnership with FORCLIME, a form of cooperation which is crucial for the conservation of the Tane' Olen forest and for the development of a system which is able to provide prosperity for the community of the Setulang Tourist Village.

Finally, as representatives of the Setulang Tourist Village community, we would like to thank all parties who have contributed to the conservation of the Tane' Olen Setulang forest. We would also like to thank the North Kalimantan Province Forestry Service and Production Forest Management Unit at Malinau, who have supported us fully in our fight to gain community forest management rights and who have helped us during the implementation of the working plan for the Tane' Olen Setulang Village Forest. May God grant us the wisdom to manage our natural resources prudently, both now and in the future.


Setulang, November 2017



Hansicov
Head of Setulang Tourist Village



The road to success is often winding.
Without endeavour, signs from mother nature will remain as such.
The road is always wide open to those who strive
to achieve good deeds. Only after one chooses to fight
for humanity, will one realize one's destiny.



The Oma Lung tribe has always fought for the forest which they believe to be their source of life. Little did they realize that their fight would become an inspiring portrait of humanity.

There is only one outcome that they seek from this fight, survival from natural disasters. This is the way of life for the Oma Lung tribe: preserving the natural relationship between human and forest.



THE OMA LUNG TRIBE'S EPIC EXODUS

Deep in the heart of Kalimantan, surrounded by the steep Bila Bezu and Bila Firing' cliffs, a small village named Long Saan lies deserted by its inhabitants. This small village, surrounded by deep ravines and located upstream of the Pujungan (*Bezongenj*) River, has now become overgrown by shrubs and has turned into a secondary forest. In the year 1968, the Dayak Kenyah Oma Lung Tribe left Long Saan and moved downstream to Setulang Village in Malinau. The Oma Lung saw themselves lulled by the fertility of Long Saan, as if waiting for the belated awakening known as *lutu rema*. Through this process of belated awakening, they came to realize the comforts of life downstream.

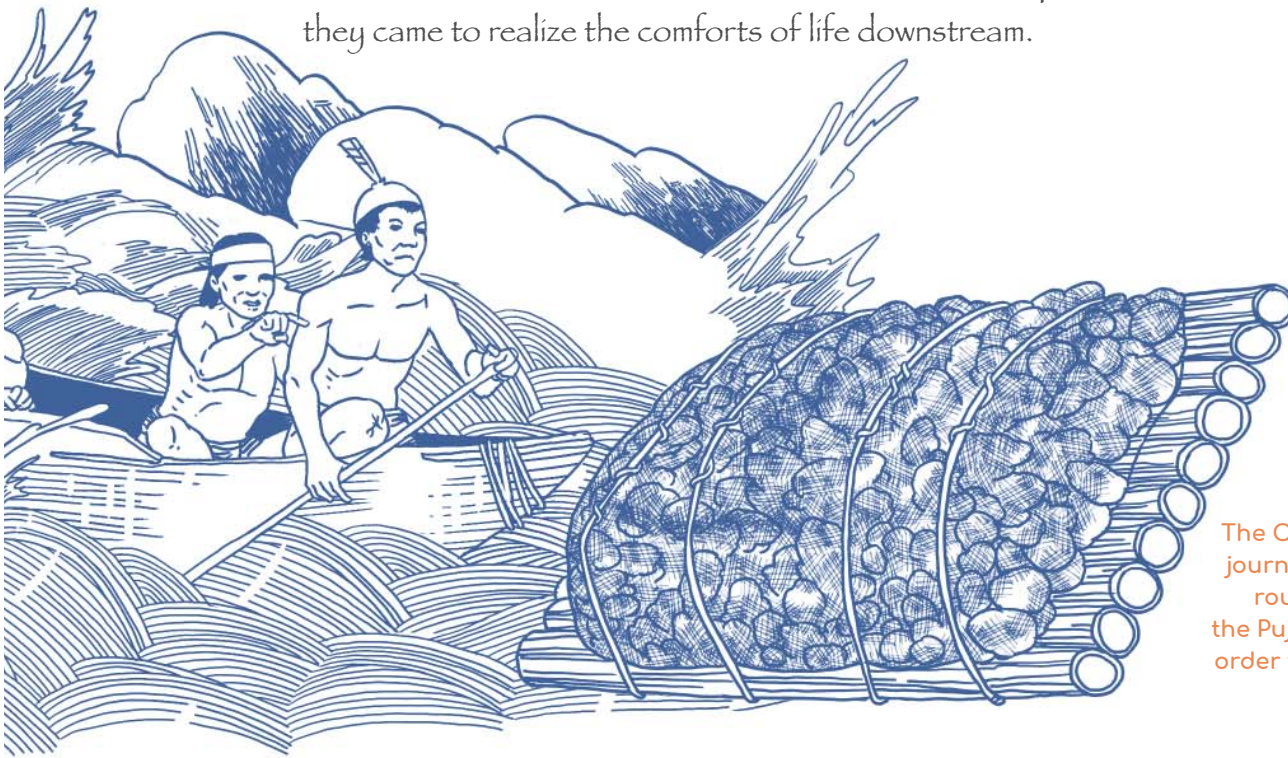


Figure 1:
The Oma Lung Tribe
journey through the
rough currents of
the Pujungan River in
order to trade goods
downstream.

ORIGINS OF THE OMA LUNG TRIBE

The ancestors of the Dayak people originally lived beside the Baram River in Serawak. They then migrated inland to Kalimantan before settling in the mountainous regions between Belaga and Baram in Serawak and the Iwan River in North Kalimantan. In the eighteenth century, under the leadership of Suhu Batu, one of the groups from Baram migrated to a mountainous area near the Iwan River. This new settlement has since become known as the Apo Kayan Highlands. The Apo Kayan Highlands consist of a large area that stretches from Long Nawang to Pujungan. In the Apo Kayan area, the Dayak community who migrated under the leadership of Suhu Batu lived prosperously and grew in numbers. They named themselves the Dayak Kenyah.

With their population increasing rapidly, the Apo Kayan Highlands soon became too small to accommodate the Dayak Kenyah. The Dayak Kenyah at Apo Kayan then scattered to surrounding areas where they built new longhouses (*oma*) and villages (*lepu*). Some migrated south to the Barito River area and forged the South Dayak Kenyah alliance, which consists of the Lepu Tau, Lepu Timmai, Lepu Bem, Lepu Tukung and Lepu Tepu. Others migrated north to the Pujungan River, Bahau River, Anan River and Malinau River areas. The groups migrating north formed the northern alliance, which consists of the Oma Lung, Oma Alim, Lepu Maut, Lepu Kulit and Kenyah Badeng. However, even though a number of the Dayak Kenyah groups formed alliances, it was not rare for them to be at war with one another.

RICE IS MORE VALUABLE THAN THE THREAT OF THE TIGER

The Dayak Kenyah Oma Lung tribe originally lived in the Iwan River area. During their time at the Iwan River, the Oma Lung tribe constantly felt insecure as a result of attacks which were waged on them by neighbouring tribes. A war between tribes always ended with the beheading of the losing party (*ngayau*) in order to legitimize the strength of the victorious party. Ultimately though, the need for safety and security pushed the Oma Lung tribe to seek a new home.

During their search, the Oma Lung tribe found the village of Long Saan, which, at the time, was settled by the Sewogho tribe. The Sewogho offered the Oma Lung a place to stay at Long Saan, as they planned to migrate to a new settlement. The Sewogho people felt that living in Long Saan was detrimental to their wellbeing, as their livestock were constantly being eaten by the tigers that roamed the caves of the Bila Bezu and Bila Fifing' cliffs. The Sewogho people felt that their own lives were also being endangered by these tigers.

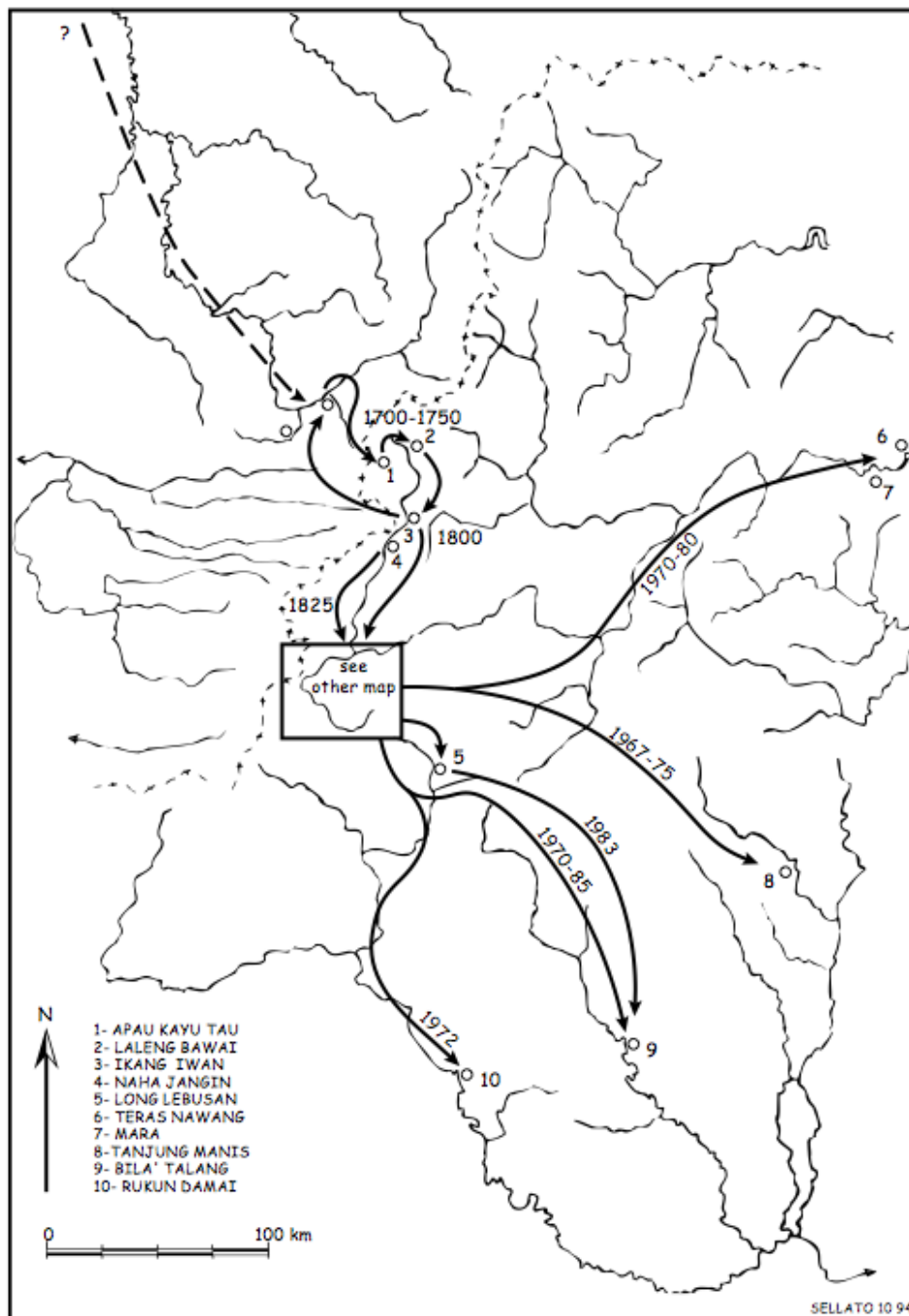


Figure 2: Dayak Kenyah Migration Route¹

¹ Sellato, 2003. in: Lawai, L. A history of the Kenyah Leppo' Tau in Kayan Hulu District, Apau Kayan. In Eghenter, C.; Sellato, B.; Devung, G.S. 2003. Social science research and conservation management in the interior of Borneo: un-ravelling past and present interactions of people and forests. CIFOR. Bogor, Indonesia. p.186

The Oma Lung believe that, in the past, tigers lived in the caves of Bila Bezu and Bila Fifing'. The ancestors of the Oma Lung tribe had kept a large fang from one of these tigers as proof of their existence. In the Oma Lung language, the tiger, clouded leopard and leopard are all named differently. For example, the clouded leopard is known as the *kole*.

Long Saan is a fertile village, despite the fact that it is located on flat and narrow land. Rice of the *Fade Mowang* variety thrives here in the terraced paddy fields which are carved into the sides of the mountains at Long Saan. One cluster of rice consists of 200 seedlings which can grow up to 160 centimetres in length. Meanwhile, the forest around Long Saan provides game, rattan and resin in abundance. The steep cliffs around Long Saan also offer protection from attacks by neighbouring tribes.

For the Oma Lung tribe, the benefits which they gain from fertile paddy fields, as well as from the abundance of natural resources found in the forest around Long Saan, outweigh the threat of the mountain tigers. The Oma Lung prevent tiger attacks by setting tiger traps which take the form of banana stems covered with meat and blood. When tigers eat the meat in the trap, their fangs get stuck in the banana stems. During their struggle to remove these stems, the Oma Lung spear the tigers to death. Through the use traps such as these, the village of Long Saan was freed from the threat of tigers, which has allowed the Oma Lung to settle peacefully at Long Saan.

TANE' OLEN, A TRIBUTE TO THE FAREN

The social system of the Oma Lung tribe consists of two castes, nobleman (*faren*) and commoners (*fanyen*). The caste system in the Oma Lung community originates from their history of migration from the Dayak Kenyah.

The caste system of the Dayak Kenyah was initiated when the community started to award unique recognition and social status to Suhu Batu for his leadership. Suhu Batu and his descendants were subsequently considered nobleman or *faren*. The *faren* functions as the leader of the village during migration and is responsible for the prosperity of the community during the development of a new village. In Dayak Kenyah tradition, a descendant of a *faren* is expected to possess the character of Suhu Batu and to demonstrate bravery, strength and wisdom.

When the Dayak Kenyah build new longhouses (*oma*), the leader of the new *oma* has to be a *faren*. However, this special right does not mean that the *faren* can rule as he likes.

Important decisions for the Dayak Kenyah community are still discussed through a forum which includes all members of the community before a decision is ultimately made by the *faren* based on the results of the community discussion.

The Dayak Kenyah community often rewards its *faren* for good leadership. The community provides the *faren* with a higher and larger room in the longhouse; work in the *faren's* field on the first day of the planting season; and provide the *faren* with a reserve forest known as *Tane' Olen*, which contains various valuable timber and game to hunt.

TANE' OLEN AS A BIOLOGICAL RESOURCE BANK

In the past, the forest around Long Saan was able to fulfil all of the daily needs of the Oma Lung people and the Oma Lung set aside a part of the forest specifically for the *faren*. This small part of the forest, which was awarded to the *faren* for good leadership, became a sort of bank or reserve forest and is known as the Tane' Olen. A Tane' Olen is owned by a *faren*. This means that the Oma Lung community cannot take any timber, fruit or forest products from a *Tane' Olen* without first seeking permission from the relevant *faren*.

However, traditionally, the Tane' Olen became an important resource bank for the entire Oma Lung community, not just for the *faren*, as fires often occurred in Long Saan village. Unfortunately, the longhouses of the Oma Lung tribe are made from a highly flammable material. The walls and floor of these longhouses are made from wood, while the roof is made from dried leaves which are known as *rae'ngkale*. The Oma Lung women cook with stoves which are placed on the floor of their houses and which are then covered with soil prior to cooking. The soil functions as a heat sink between the stove and the floor. However, this technique often fails to prevent the occurrence of accidental fires in the tribe's houses. Furthermore, it is not uncommon for a fire in one house to spread to neighbouring houses and, ultimately, to destroy an entire village.

When fires occur in a village, the Tane' Olen becomes a source of timber for the rebuilding of the village houses. With the *faren's* permission, the community can take timber and rattan to use as construction materials. Furthermore, the Tane' Olen also becomes a source of food in times of famine and can provide both fruit and game such as deer and wild boar. From generation to generation, the Tane' Olen have thus become a biological resource bank for the Oma Lung tribe and are used at Long Saan during periods of difficulty and disaster.

BATTLING THE CURRENTS FOR SALT

The village of Long Saan is located deep in the mountains and is surrounded by steep cliffs. To get to the nearest river, the Pujungan, one has to take a half-day hike down the steep mountain slope. However, for the Oma Lung people, the forests around Long Saan provided all they need to survive.

The Oma Lung tribe was dependent on dammar and rattan from the Long Saan forest, which they then traded for commodities which were not available at Long Saan, such as salt, iron machetes, cooking oil and calico cloth – a key component of the Oma Lung's traditional clothing and which had replaced tree bark. However, at the time, salt was the primary reason that the Oma Lung people traded their forest products at the Tanjung Selor market, which is located downriver from their village. The journey that the men of Oma Lung took in order to trade these various commodities was known as *nyelai*.

Finding dammar (*nyateng*) and rattan in the Long Saan forest was the first of many steps in the Oma Lung's trading journey. In order to acquire these key commodities, the men of Oma Lung would organize themselves into groups of 50 and set out on five boats. Each group would survey a different area of the forest to find areas with the best dammar trees. Once located, the men would set up camp near these trees and the hard work began. In order to collect resin from dammar trees, the men had to climb them and install resin taps. This was no easy feat. Bravery and skill were needed in order to climb trees which can reach up to 60 metres in height. While some of the men climbed the dammar trees in order to collect resin, others would gather rattan.

The collection of resin and rattan from the Long Saan forest would last for two weeks. Once the resin and rattan had been collected, the men of Oma Lung weaved rattan baskets, which they would then use to carry the resin to the river. At the riverside, the men would construct three rafts of 10 by 12 metres, which they then used to carry their commodities downstream. The piles of resin and rattan, which could reach up to 2 metres in height, were strapped to the rafts using rattan ropes. Sailing on the boats that they had brought with them from the village, the men then guided the rafts downstream, dodging rocks in the Pujungan, Bahau and Kayan Rivers along the way.

Navigating the rocky currents of the Pujungan River was not an easy task. Skill was needed in order to guide both boats and rafts through the rough currents, while plenty of rocks had to be avoided along the way. Indeed, sometimes the boats and rafts would break apart when they hit rocks in the river. At moments like this, the men had to swim through the strong currents in order to save the resin and rattan that they had collected, becoming soaked in

the process. Indeed, various parts of their bodies, such as their behinds, legs and hands were often injured as a result of these struggles and the continuous drenching. The men of Oma Lung would treat their bruises with limes, which they collected when they docked their boats and rafts at the riverbank, and would then set up camp for the night. After their exhausting struggle with the river, the Oma Lung men would rest and regain their strength by dining on the food that they had brought with them from Long Saan. They cooked rice from Long Saan and ate it with either pork or fish, which they caught near their riverside camp. Interestingly, the Oma Lung men had come up with a unique strategy which they employed in order to ease their return journey from Tanjung Selor. They would store their remaining cans of rice in the ground at their stopover spots and dig them up to eat on their way back to Long Saan. These places or pit stops were marked by the characteristics of the surrounding landscape and could be found along the Pujungan, Bahau and Kayan Rivers.

The forest products harvested by the Oma Lung men were sold to Chinese merchants at Tanjung Selor market. These merchants also provided shelter for the Oma Lung, who would then rest and restore their energy after their long journey. The resin and rattan were traded for salt, calico cloth, iron machetes and cooking oil. Each member of the tribe was required to trade the same amounts of commodities in order to ensure that they brought home equal amounts on each of their boats and rafts. Generally, each of the men received 24 blocks of salt, one can of cooking oil and several sheets of calico cloth. The men would wrap the salt and cloth in palm leaves (*Licuala valida* Becc), before securing them with rattan ropes. Palm leaves, which have a layer of waterproof wax, were also very useful in terms of preventing the salt and calico cloth from getting wet.

The journey home from Tanjung Selor to Long Saan was much more difficult than the journey to the market. The men of Oma Lung had to struggle against the current as they headed up towards the mountains and their village. Often, the men were forced to carry their boats and the various commodities that they had acquired in the market along the riverbank when the current became too tough for them to fight. The current at the Pujungan River could reach up to 2-3 metres, often flooding their boats and wetting the goods that they were carrying. Fortunately, the palm leaves protected their goods from the water.

During their journey home to Long Saan, the men of Oma Lung would camp overnight in the same locations that they had visited on their way to the market. They would then dig up the rice that they had previously hidden and eat it in order to restore their strength. However, this rice often proved insufficient to fully restore the men's energy after the tough fight against the rough river current. To overcome this deficiency, the men would collect and eat sago, which could be found in abundance in the forest. Overall, the trading journey taken by the Oma Lung men required two months to complete and was all for the sake of salt and calico cloth, which they happily provided for their wives and children.

LUTU REMA, BELATED AWAKENING

During their various trading journeys downstream, the men of Oma Lung were treated to scenery vastly different than that which could be found at Long Saan. Indeed, they were amazed that the downstream course of the river was not entirely filled with sharp rocks, as it was up in the mountains. The current was also much calmer and easier to navigate, requiring only small amounts of energy to conquer. They also came to realize that the area downstream was a more comfortable place in which to live, with its health centres and schools.

Many at Long Saan died in 1956 as the result of an epidemic. Alas, there were no public health officials on hand during this epidemic, due to Long Saan's remote and hard to reach location. Meanwhile, right up until 1968, there was only one teacher at Long Saan, who was responsible for teaching all of the elementary school children from first to sixth grade. Difficulties relating to trade and proper access to healthcare, education and government services prompted the men of Oma Lung to consider moving their home downstream. They communicated their desire to resettle downstream to the other Dayak Kenyah communities who lived along the Kayan River. Hearing of the Oma Lung's desire to resettle, the other communities laughed and dubbed the Oma Lung as *luturema*, i.e. late to realize the situation. However, for the Oma Lung, it was a case of better late than never. Over the following years, the Oma Lung prepared themselves for resettlement. In order to avoid famine after resettlement, they prepared rice in a barn which they would be able to consume during the first years in their new home.

THE ISIJ BIRD'S OMEN FOR SETULANG

Under the leadership of Adjang Lidem, the men of Oma Lung began their search for a new home along the Kayan River during their various trading journeys downstream to Tanjung Selor. During their search, the men realized that most of the shores along the Kayan River had already been settled by other tribes. Adjang Lidem's father, as the elder *faren* at Oma Lung, advised the men to search for a new home not yet settled by other tribes, so that the Oma Lung would be able to continue to live together as one community. The Oma Lung thus made an effort to avoid living alongside other tribes in order to prevent future conflicts related to the rights and responsibilities of the indigenous and migrant tribe. They realized that the rights of natives and newcomers were often not equal and that newcomers often had to put up with lesser rights as regards the availability of local natural resources.

Following the advice of the elder *faren*, in the year 1963, Adjang Lidem led a search team north of Long Saan. During the search, the Oma Lung asked for assistance from the Punan

people as they struggled to reach Malinau, an area of forest still untouched by human activity at the time. The Punan were skilful at finding directions, even through areas of dense forests whose canopies blocked out the sun, which is usually utilized for navigation purposes. Walking below the canopy of the Kalimantan forest, however, it is impossible to depend on the sun for direction finding. In spite of this disadvantage though, the Punan people were able to find their way to Malinau with ease.



Figure 3: Alang Impang delivered a message carried by the Isij bird, specifically that the Oma Lung tribe would become renowned.

The Oma Lung continued their journey along the Malinau River in order to meet with the customary chief of the Merap tribe, Alang Impang, who lived in Langap, Malinau. They asked for Alang Impang's permission to resettle their homes in Malinau. Alang Impang proposed three locations for the Oma Lung tribe: Long Loreh, Long Solok and Long Setulang. Long Loreh and Long Solok were not picked by Adjang Lidem because of their considerable distance from the market. As a result, Long Setulang was chosen as the new home for the Oma Lung tribe.

While Alang Impang and the other Oma Lung elders were discussing their new home at Long Setulang, a honey-sucking bird with a long beak, an *isij* bird, flew into Alang Impang's longhouse. Adjang tried to kill the *isij* bird because the *isij* is considered a sacred animal in the tribe's ancient belief system (amen), a belief system that contradicts Christianity, the religion subsequently adopted by Adjang Lidem. Alang prevented Adjang from killing the bird, however. Instead, Alang caught the *isij* bird and spoke to it as if they understood one another. Alang then delivered the prophecy brought to him by the *isij* bird. The prophecy stated that the Oma Lung tribe would become renowned for its choice to live at Long Setulang. At the time, no one from the Oma Lung tribe understood Alang's prophecy. Indeed, Adjang Lidem and the other men of Oma Lung kept Alang Impang's prophecy to themselves and continued in their pursuit to resettle the tribe at Long Setulang. They only understood that the *isij* bird had brought with it a good omen regarding the tribe's move to Long Setulang, without realizing the fame that would ultimately come to the Oma Lung tribe.

AN ARDUOUS EMIGRATION

Upon their arrival at Long Setulang, the pioneers of the Oma Lung tribe's migration stayed with members of the Oma Lung tribe who had previously moved to Batu Kajang. They opened a field and planted rice, yams and bananas in preparation for their families' arrival at Long Setulang.

In 1968, the Oma Lung tribe finally decided that the time had arrived to resettle their families from Long Saan to Long Setulang, which had already been prepared by the pioneers of the migration. The large-scale migration was thus completed; however, it proved to be not such an easy task at the time. The migration of the Oma Lung tribe to Setulang Village was undertaken over three periods. The first period occurred in 1968, followed by the second period in 1973 and a final period of migration in 1978. The first migration took four months to complete, however, the subsequent the two migrations took only two months each.

During the first migration period, the Oma Lung rowed their boats downstream along the Pujungan River. This was followed by a difficult row upstream, against the currents of the Bahau and Anan Rivers. The migrants then left their boats at the Anan River and continued their journey northwards on foot towards the tributaries of the Malinau River. Around one hundred people, from the elderly all the way down to the children of the Oma Lung tribe, both men and women, walked through the virgin forest. The group then hiked through the mountains that lay between the Kayan and Malinau Rivers. The elderly wore clothing made from *taleng* tree bark, while the parents and children wore clothing made out of calico cloth. They walked slowly while carrying their stock of rice, pots and household appliances, which they had used during their stay at Long Saan. From one camp to the next, the people slowly moved their belongings, and during this difficult journey, the lives of many of the elderly and younger members of the Oma Lung were sadly lost.

During their long trek through the wilderness, finding rivers was crucial to the Oma Lung's survival, as they provided vital sources of water which could be used for both drinking and cooking. At each encounter with a river, the Oma Lung would build a camp and rest. During periods when no river was found, the Oma Lung men were forced to search for wild-boar mud holes which could be tapped for water. In addition to rice, the Oma Lung met their need for carbohydrates by eating sago and taro, which could be found in the forest. Meanwhile, protein was available in abundance, as the Oma Lung could easily catch fish from the rivers and hunt wild boar and deer in the forest. Once they had found the Malinau River, the Oma Lung constructed rafts which they used to wade through waters of the Malinau towards Long Setulang River. It took them two weeks to build the rafts. The first group arrived at Setulang four months after they had left their previous home at Long Saan.

The following two migrations proved to be considerably easier than the first. The tribe's new settlement had been developed, while the men of Oma Lung worked as lumberjacks to earn money in order to rent motorboats (*ketinting*). In 1978, the men ferried their motorboats back to Long Saan to pick up their relatives. During the third migration period, the children and the elderly rode in boats, while the men walked. However, walking through the wilderness proved to be a difficult journey that took two months to complete. A total of six camps were built by the Oma Lung between Long Saan and Long Setulang during this third migration period. This included the Long Aenj and Long Bate Afe camps, both of which were only used for one night each; the Long Songe Befang and Long Songe Janeng camps, which were used for two nights each; the Lepu Be'a camp up in the mountains, which was used for two nights; and the Long Songe Eken camp, which was used for a full two weeks. At the Long Songe Eken camp, the Oma Lung built boats which they would subsequently use to travel along the river. During their trips on these boats, the Oma Lung also stopped over at Long Lafa, Long Jalan and Tanjung Nanga.

Long Setulang was legally established as a village for the Oma Lung through the issuance of an official decree by the Bulungan Regent in 1974. The village boundaries were established and upstream bordered the neighbouring Setarap Village, while downstream the village boundaries bordered Sentaban Village. Long Setulang officially became part of the Malinau Sub-district. At the time, Malinau was a remote sub-district in East Kalimantan Province, without roads and only accessible through a two-hour journey via small motorboat. In 1978, the Oma Lung tribe finally completed their migration from Long Saan to Setulang.

Thus, Long Saan, a remote village lying deep in the heart of Kalimantan, was left deserted. Slowly but surely, Long Saan was weathered by time, sunlight and the humidity of the tropical rainforest and this small village at the source of the Pujungan River turned to forest once again. In contrast, the forest at Long Setulang in Malinau was cleared and became the new home of the Dayak Kenyah Oma Lung tribe. A new home which was to be known as Setulang Village.

A PIECE OF FOREST FOR EVERYONE

The first group of Oma Lung migrants cleared the primary forest at Long Setulang in order to build a village and to create fields. Once the new village and fields had been prepared, and in harmony with previous Oma Lung tradition at Long Saan, the community prepared a Tane' Olen for the *faren*, Adjang Lidem, in order to thank him for his leadership during the migration. However, Adjang Lidem rejected the Tane' Olen, arguing that since many of the Oma Lung had not moved to Setulang, he did not deserve the Tane' Olen. Adjang Lidem wanted every single member of the Oma Lung tribe to move to Setulang and to choose a part of the forest at Setulang for their homes and fields. Adjang Lidem believed that a *faren* should only receive Tane' Olen once everyone had received a piece of the forest through which they could make their livelihoods.

Adjang Lidem's reluctance to receive the Tane' Olen did not mean that the Oma Lung had forgotten their tradition of setting aside areas of forest, however. At Setulang, the Oma Lung tribe still allocated a part of the primary forest as reserve forest. The community was thus prohibited from clearing this area of land. The Oma Lung people are required to protect the reserve forest in order to preserve their source of water. The customary chief also prohibited the Oma Lung from taking timber and valuable fauna from the reserve forest while allowing them to hunt game within this specially designated area. This custom applies to all members of the Oma Lung tribe, as well as to other neighbouring tribes. Indeed, even though the reserve forest is not owned by the *faren* anymore, the authority required in order to utilize the reserve forest still ultimately resides with the *faren* of the Oma Lung tribe, the descendants of Adjang Lidem.

Adjang Lidem at Oma Setulang



Adjang Lidem has been memorialized as the name of the customs hall which can be found in the Setulang Tourist Village. At a relatively young age, from 1953-1954, Adjang Lidem became the village head at Long Saan owing to his literacy. However, due to his passion for trading, he was often away from the village. As a result, the position of village head was taken from him and awarded to Lusak Jalung, who filled the role from 1954-1962. The experience that he gained from trading in Malaysia opened Lidem's mind to the possibility of the Oma Lung moving downstream in order to obtain better access to education and healthcare facilities and to be closer to government officials. Therefore, once he was reinstated as the village head of Long Saan, Lidem lead a survey to Malinau in 1963. Lidem and other customary leaders pioneered the opening of the virgin forests at Long Setulang and built a new home for the Oma Lung tribe at Long Setulang.

Born as a descendant of the *faren*, Adjang Lidem was lucky enough to be educated at a school. Young Lidem often travelled on trading journeys to Malaysia along the Tanjung Selor, Tarakan and Nunukan trading route. His father wanted him to become a pastor and had plans for Adjang Lidem to attend the College of Theology in the city of Makassar. However, this plan came to nothing when Makassar was bombed by allied forces during World War II.



Figure 4: Adjang Lidem is memorialized as the name of the customs hall at Setulang Village.





Figure 5: Star-studded skies cover Setulang Village at night.



SETULANG AND TANE' OLEN

When the sun retires into its cradle, the hills and forest canopy around Setulang become black rolling waves. The dark orange dusk turns to night as dark as black velvet sprinkled with diamonds. A young crescent moon, just three days old, hangs between a sea of stars, its brightness just enough to light the path to Setulang.

CHAPTER

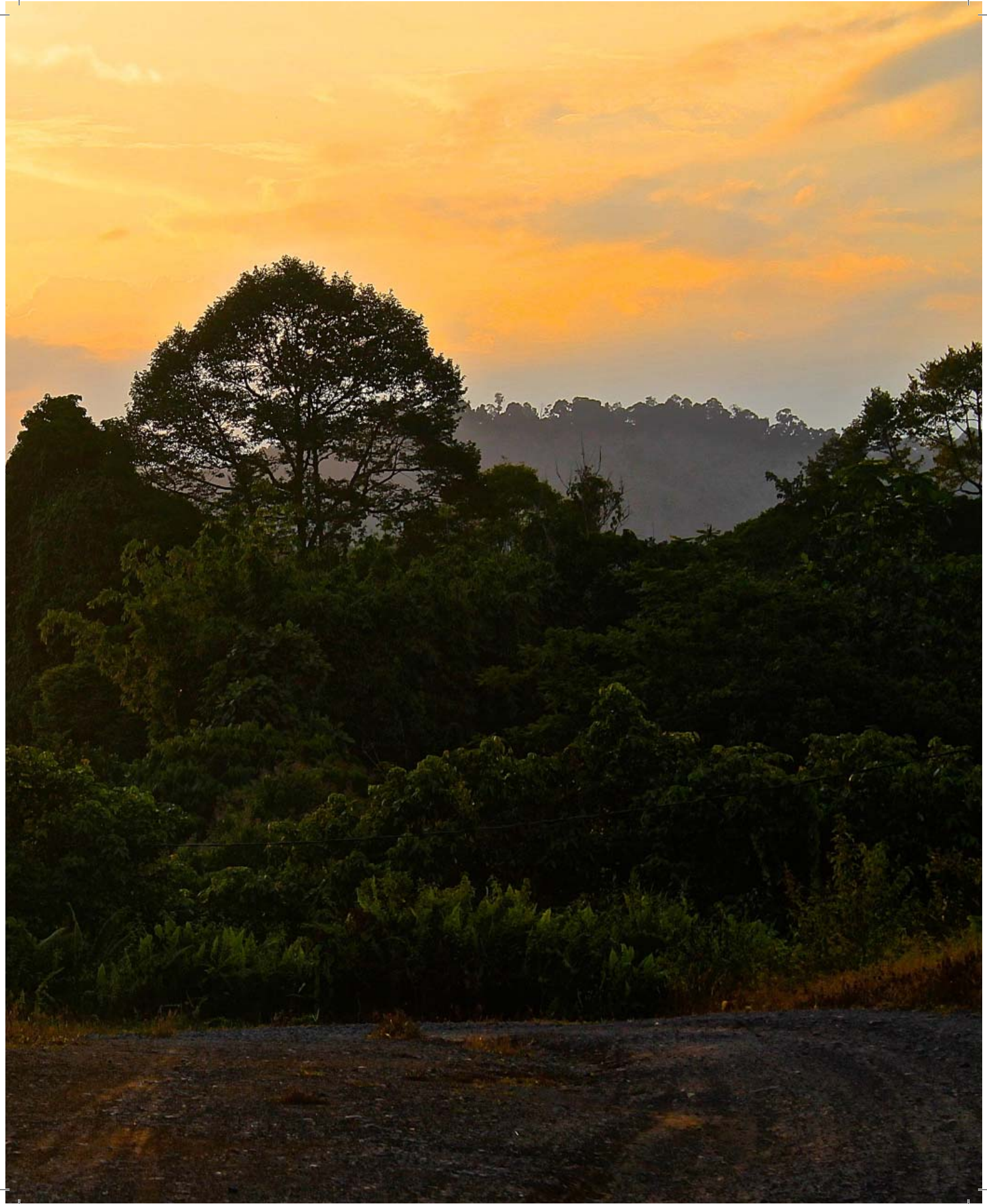
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The sound of the *severi* bug fills the darkness of the shrubs and *lavenj* forest. On the porch of his stilt house, Matius íng, the customary chief for planting rituals, enjoys the crescent moon in peace. His lips slowly utter nature's signs for Setulang. The night is known as the *bolenj ubi* crescent moon and is the night on which animals roam freely in the forest. A night to hunt for game then and, the following morning, a fine day for planting yams.



Figure 6: Sunset at Setulang.



LAND USE BASED ON CUSTOMARY WISDOM

The equatorial sun shines brightly on the village of Setulang, dazzling the eyes. In August, the temperature at Setulang can reach up to 32.5°C. However, in January, the temperature is a relatively mild 23.5°C. The air is hot and humid and makes one sweat relentlessly. In fact, Setulang has no certain dry season, as almost every month it rains for an average of 20 days, with a mean monthly rainfall of 205-360 millimetres. As for plants, the heat and the rain are blessings, as they trigger optimal photosynthesis and transpiration, which in turn results in a level of humidity in Setulang that can reach up to 84%.² It's no wonder then that every type of land at Setulang is easily overgrown with bushes. Meanwhile, secondary forests in cultivated areas grow quickly and densely.

The Oma Lung tribe organizes its new village at Setulang based on customary law that has been passed down through the generations. The stilt houses of the Setulang people are built on flat land, along the Long Setulang River and are surrounded by hills which reach up to heights of 150-500 metres above sea level. The barn used to store the community's rice is located on top of a hill that lies far from the residents, so as to prevent the rice from becoming spoiled during fires and floods. The primary forests around the village have been converted into

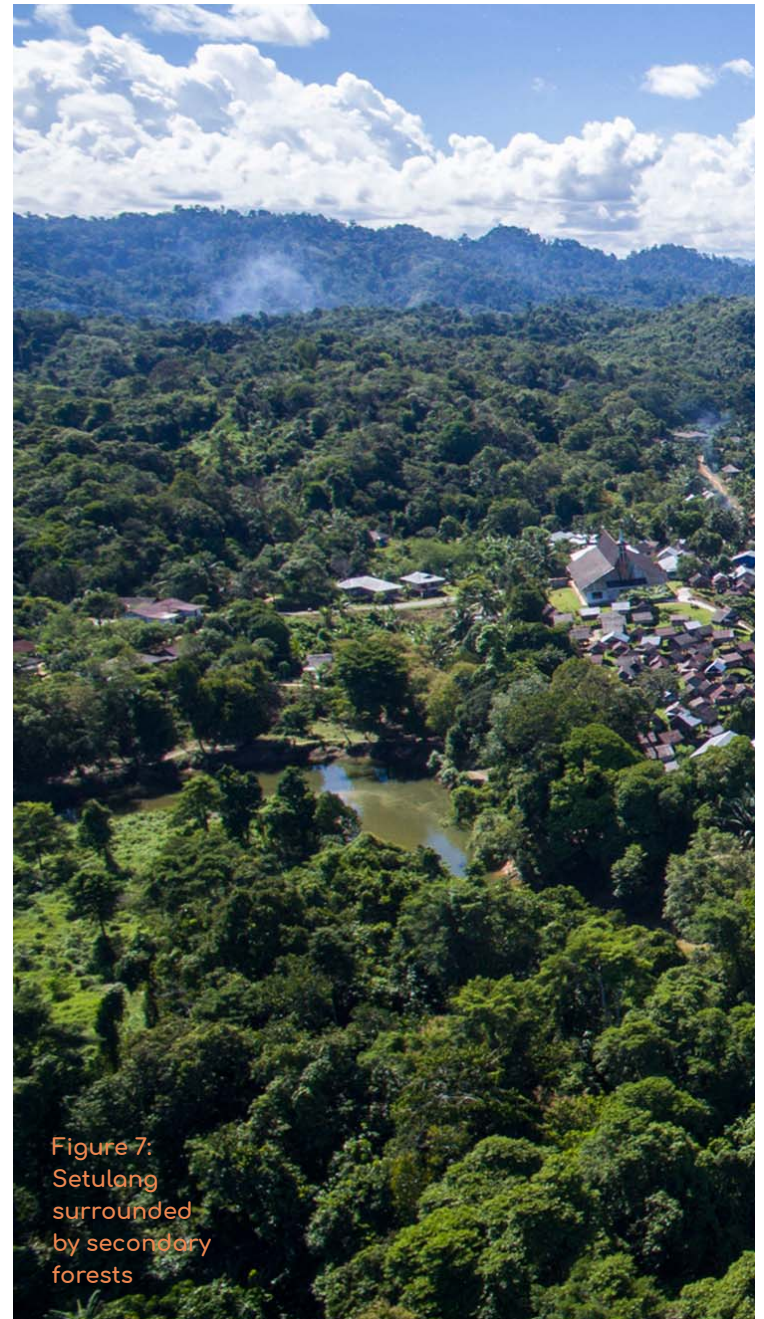


Figure 7:
Setulang
surrounded
by secondary
forests

² Badan Perencanaan dan Pembangunan Daerah Kalimantan Utara. Peraturan Daerah RPJPD Provinsi Kalimantan Utara 2005-2025. Kondisi Umum Daerah. p.II-3, II-4.



fields for crops, which in rotation become secondary forests. The Oma Lung tribe names these secondary forests based on the level of plant growth in each. A secondary forest that has been growing for one year is known as a *tenj* forest. Secondary forests that have been growing for 2-5 years are known as *lavenj* forests, while 6-10-year-old secondary forests are known as *jeko* forests. If a field contains good timber or fruit, then the area is conserved as a timber forest (*fulung kaze*) or a fruit forest (*fulung beva*). The *fulung kaze* and *fulung beva* provide the village with all of their daily needs as regards timber and fruit.

The Oma Lung tribe has also set aside a part of the primary forest as a reserve or protected area of forest for the tribe's future. The size of the village is legally recorded as 11,530 hectares, while the size of the area of reserved forest is 5,314 hectares. These reserved forests are no longer considered as Tane' Olen or forests owned by noblemen (*faren*), so the Oma Lung at Setulang Village more often refer to these reserved forests as protected forests.

CULTIVATION BASED ON NATURE'S SIGNS

The Oma Lung are hardworking people. At the break of dawn, the tribe is already busy preparing to head out to their fields. Backpacks made of rattan (*belanyec*) are filled with machetes (*mandau*) and drinking water for work in the fields. Both men and women can be found in the fields and often wear wide hats known as *saung*, which are woven from the leaves of the fan palms which can be found around the area.

Some head out to the fields in boats (*ketingting*), while others ride motorcycles or walk. Along the Setulang and Malinau Rivers, docks are available for boats to anchor, although their numbers are dwindling due to the increasing popularity of motorcycles in the area. Setulang Village has two wooden docks which are used by the Oma Lung to park the boats that they use to travel to their fields or for trips downriver to Malinau.

The Oma Lung at Setulang still practices shifting cultivation in the fields. Their agricultural activities follow the guidance of customary chiefs who are responsible for the local crop cycles. Following their ancestors, the crop cycle is estimated based on the growth of the moon in the sky. The difference is that today, the crop cycle is announced when the Oma Lung gathers for prayer at the local church.



Figure 8: The Oma Lung community's barns are built on top of hills near the village.

Customary leaders who guide the crop cycle, such as Matius Ling, are responsible for announcing when and where crop fields should be opened. All members of the Oma Lung community are required to comply with such announcements. For the Oma Lung tribe, customary guides are useful for the prevention of pests through a simultaneous planting cycle and for the control of fires during periods of forest clearing.

The customary chief makes an observation at the beginning of the new moon. The chief usually selects an area of *jeko* secondary forest between 7 and 10 years of age which is to be cleared for planting. This selection process involves checking that the relevant trees and shrubs in the forest have sufficiently returned the fertility of the land after its previous use as crop fields. The Oma Lung tribe believes that previously cultivated land must be given the chance to grow back naturally into forest before reuse and this has proved to be an effective method for returning fertility to the land.

All members of the Oma Lung tribe follow the guidance provided by the customary chief. If the chief announces land clearing (*merimba*) in the east, then everyone will open up the secondary forest in the east. Together, in shifts, they will clear then burn the forest in order to make space for the fields. Burning is undertaken when the rains stop for at least three days in a row. The Oma Lung tribe often looks out for signs of the coming dry season in the plants around them. For example, the tribe knows that the

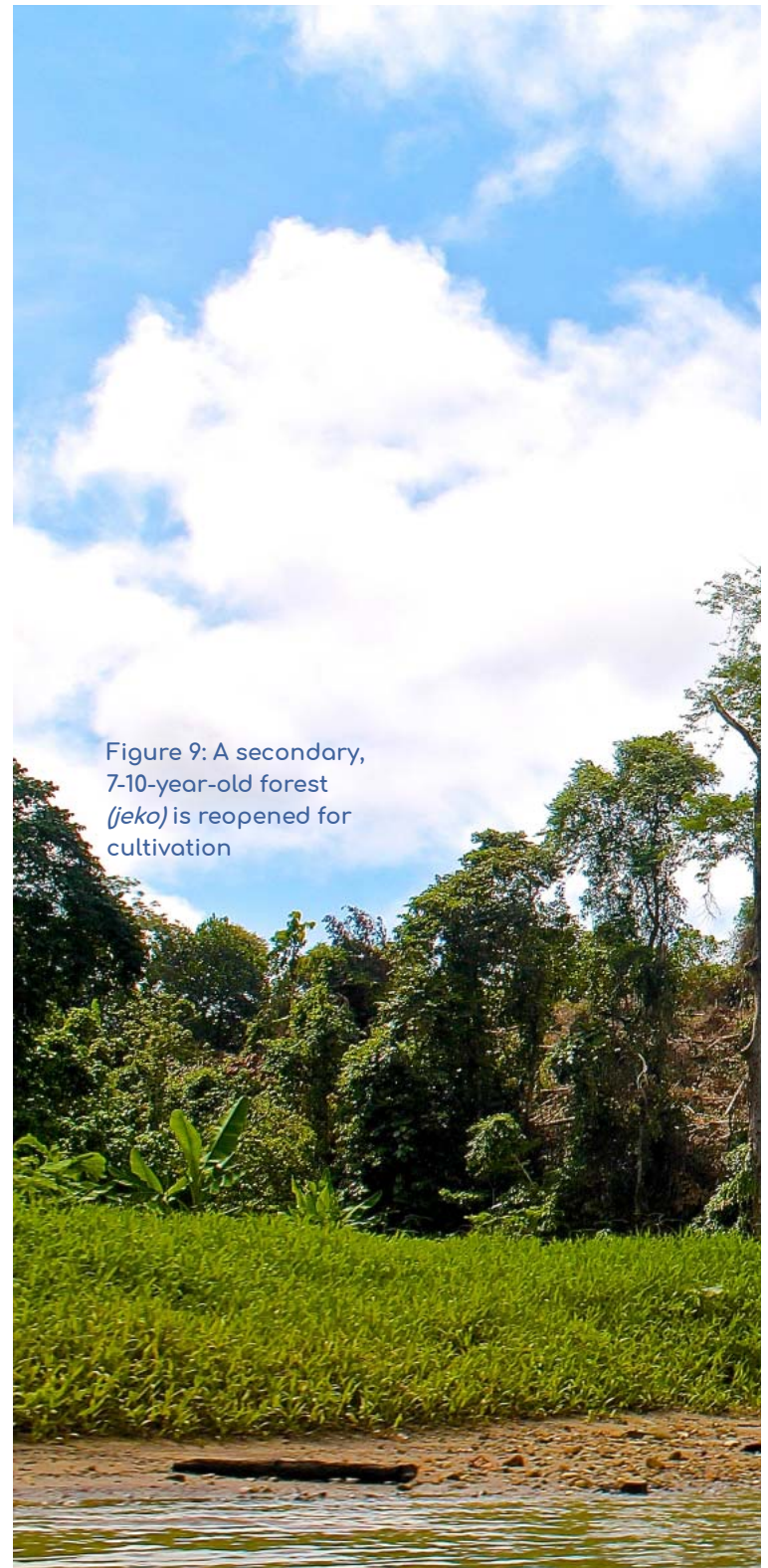


Figure 9: A secondary, 7-10-year-old forest (*jeko*) is reopened for cultivation



dry season has arrived when the blossoms of the *benggaris* tree are spotted or when roots start emerging down by the riverside.

Throughout the *merimba* season, the area destined to be burned is marked by a sign which is known as *helong* (ghost fire). The Oma Lung then cuts the trees in compliance with the felling direction designated by the customary chief. The wind is observed carefully so that the fire can be controlled. Fire breaks are built in order to limit the area that is burned through land clearance as a result of forest litter. This ensures that the fire will not spread beyond the designated area. Water hoses, fire extinguishers and tools for clearing forest litters are prepared beforehand. In practice, the Oma Lung can control the fire so that it does not spread to other parts of the forest. Moreover, *merimba* is undertaken far from the protected forest at Setulang Village. However, *merimba* activities are sometimes undertaken close to forests belonging to neighbouring tribes, and as a consequence, this process can often lead to conflict.

Land clearing is undertaken in shifts. Working in shifts (*senguyun*) is intended for widows, noblemen and other members of the community. After the land clearing has been completed, the Oma Lung tribe then relies on signs from the moon. Four days prior to a full moon (*lo'ong fazang*) is believed to be the best time for planting rice in the fields. The Oma Lung observes a taboo on the planting of rice during the full moon (*belasung*), as the tribe has learned that rats deplete the seeds at this time. The Oma Lung are prohibited from planting rice, yams, bananas, peanuts and cassava during the full moon.

In the Oma Lung tradition, noblemen (*faren*) are given first priority as regards the planting of rice. The rice planting period concludes with the ghost ritual (*bali togenj*) in the evening, which is believed to repel the evil spirits that can destroy a harvest. During this ritual, the Oma Lung youngsters wear terrifying ghost costumes and masks and parade around the village carrying torches in the hope that there will be a successful planting season and that their crops will be protected from peril and failure.

The Oma Lung no longer plants *Fade Mowang* rice, the inherited rice that they used to plant when they were still living at Long Saan. Since the move, the tribe has learned that *Fade Mowang* rice is not suitable for the soil and air of Setulang. Instead, the Oma Lung plants rice variants: *Telang Usan*, *Langsat*, *Pimping* and *Ketan Ubeg*; the seeds of which are obtained from relatives in Batu Kajang. The crop cycle of the Oma Lung concludes with a feast and a harvesting fiesta. All members of the community happily enjoy dishes which are set out on rows of banana leaves and served along the middle of the road.

OMA LUNG CROP CYCLE BASED ON THE MOON'S SIGNS





Moon Shape	Name and Meaning for the Crop Cycle
	TA' BOLENJ (New moon)
	BOLENJ UBI (Three-day-old moon) Many animals, such as deer and snakes, emerge during the night. This is the best time for hunting
	MUJENG BALA KEVENG (Five-day-old moon) The sign to plant cassava
	TENG BOLENJ (Eight-day-old moon) Not suitable for planting, as the day is very hot
	SALAK BOLENJ (10-day-old moon) The sign to plant peanuts, salak, taro, bananas and rice
	LO'ONG FAZANG (Four days before a full moon) The best day to plant rice
	BELASUNG OR AMET (full moon) Not suitable for planting rice, peanuts, yams, bananas or cassava



Figure 10: Lavenj, secondary forest

AWARENESS OF PROTECTED FOREST

The ancestors of the Oma Lung observed that the forests that tend to develop on land which has previously been cultivated (*tenj*, *lavenj* and *jeko*) cannot provide fruit or game for the people. Furthermore, the quality of the timber in these forests is inferior to that which is found in areas of primary forests (*mpek*). Moreover, only small birds and the *isij* bird live in these secondary forests, owing to a lack of food available for other animals and birds. Trees that grow in the secondary forests can only reach up to 20 meters in height. Even then, the only tree that can actually reach this height is the *beneva* (*Macaranga* sp), a type of tree which produces timber which is easily weathered, unlike the timber which is sourced from more valuable trees, such as *meranti* or lime trees. Knowledge of primary and secondary forests is passed down from generation to generation, motivated by the customary chiefs at Setulang, who allocate a part of the primary forest as reserved or protected forest which is set aside for the future of the Oma Lung.

The motivation to allocate areas of protected forest grew stronger as the customary chiefs of the Oma Lung observed that the primary forest at Setulang was of a high quality. The primary forest near the source of the Setulang River is an intact and perfect lowland area of dipterocarp forest. The pores in the soil, a result of plant roots and animals inside the Setulang primary forest, produce water that flows into and becomes springs at the source of the Setulang River. These springs produce more than ten tributaries inside Setulang's forest and are an important source of water for the Oma Lung tribe. The plants inside the primary forest include lime trees (*Dryobalanops* sp); keruing trees (*Dipterocarpus* sp); meranti trees (*Shorea* sp); tengkawang trees (*Shorea macrophylla*); ulin trees (*Eusideroxylon zwageri*); fruits such as terap, durian, bitter beans (*petai*); and game such as boar, deer and fish. The forest is very dense. In fact, within Setulang's primary forest, a tree can be found which has a diameter of 940 centimetres.

The desire for a protected forest for the Oma Lung at Setulang was also encouraged by the high demand for the *tengkawang* fruit (known as *illipe* nuts) in the years 1970 and 1973. At the time, the tengkawang fruit provided significant economic benefit for the Oma Lung tribe. Indeed, it is told that Chinese traders in the markets of Malinau would wait patiently for the arrival of the Oma Lung tribe with their cargo of tengkawang fruit. One can of tengkawang fruit was valued at IDR 500, which at the time was equal to one sheet of tin roofing.

Realization of the high biodiversity and economic value of the primary forest at Setulang Village came naturally for the Oma Lung tribe. Traditional philosophy and knowledge passed down from generation to generation encouraged them to consciously set aside a part of the



Figure 11: Tane' Olen forest.

primary forest as savings in a kind of biological resource bank, in order to protect the tribe from the uncertainties of life. This tradition of savings in the form of areas of forest land has meant that overall, the primary forests between the Mangkuk Mountains, Semiling River and Nyamuk River at Malinau, North Kalimantan continue to thrive.

A CHALLENGING PHASE FOR PROTECTED FOREST

During the period between 1980 and 1990, the forests of Kalimantan were massively controlled by forest concession companies. Many traditional villages in Kalimantan were tempted to sell the primary forests around their villages to these companies.

In 1990, the protected forest at Setulang was at risk. The various members of the Setulang community who ventured abroad returned home with modern sawing machines and equipment. People then started to fight for wood in the primary forests upstream of the Setulang River. This caused alarm among the customary chiefs, who were concerned that the protected forest could not be saved. Furthermore, regional autonomy opened up opportunities for holders of logging permits to invest in the area.

The temptation to sell the primary forest to these logging companies had to be addressed on multiple occasions by the residents of Setulang Village. Five forest concession companies offered the Setulang people compensation of IDR 75,000 per cubic meter of timber from their protected forest. The temptation of getting their hands on billions of rupiah started to sway the Oma Lung tribe. Some of the people wanted the protected forest to be sold, while others wanted the tradition to continue for generations to come, as they knew the importance of having a reserve forest from their experience at Long Saan.

In 1995, for the first time, a forest concession company offered the people of Setulang Village, through Village Head, Elisar Ipui, a logging cooperation for timber in the upper Setulang River area. However, this offer was ultimately rejected after a village discussion which took into consideration the damage that such cooperation would cause to the protected forest. This insight was gathered through the experiences of the Oma Lung who had worked for logging companies in Malaysia and who had observed the disasters that the loss of the forest had caused for the area, such as flooding, mudslides and drought.

In 1999, an offer to sell the protected forest came again. This same offer was also made to the neighbouring villages of Setarap and Sentaban. Charles Kole Adjang, as a descendant of Adjang Lidem, and also acting in his role of Setulang village head (a position that he held

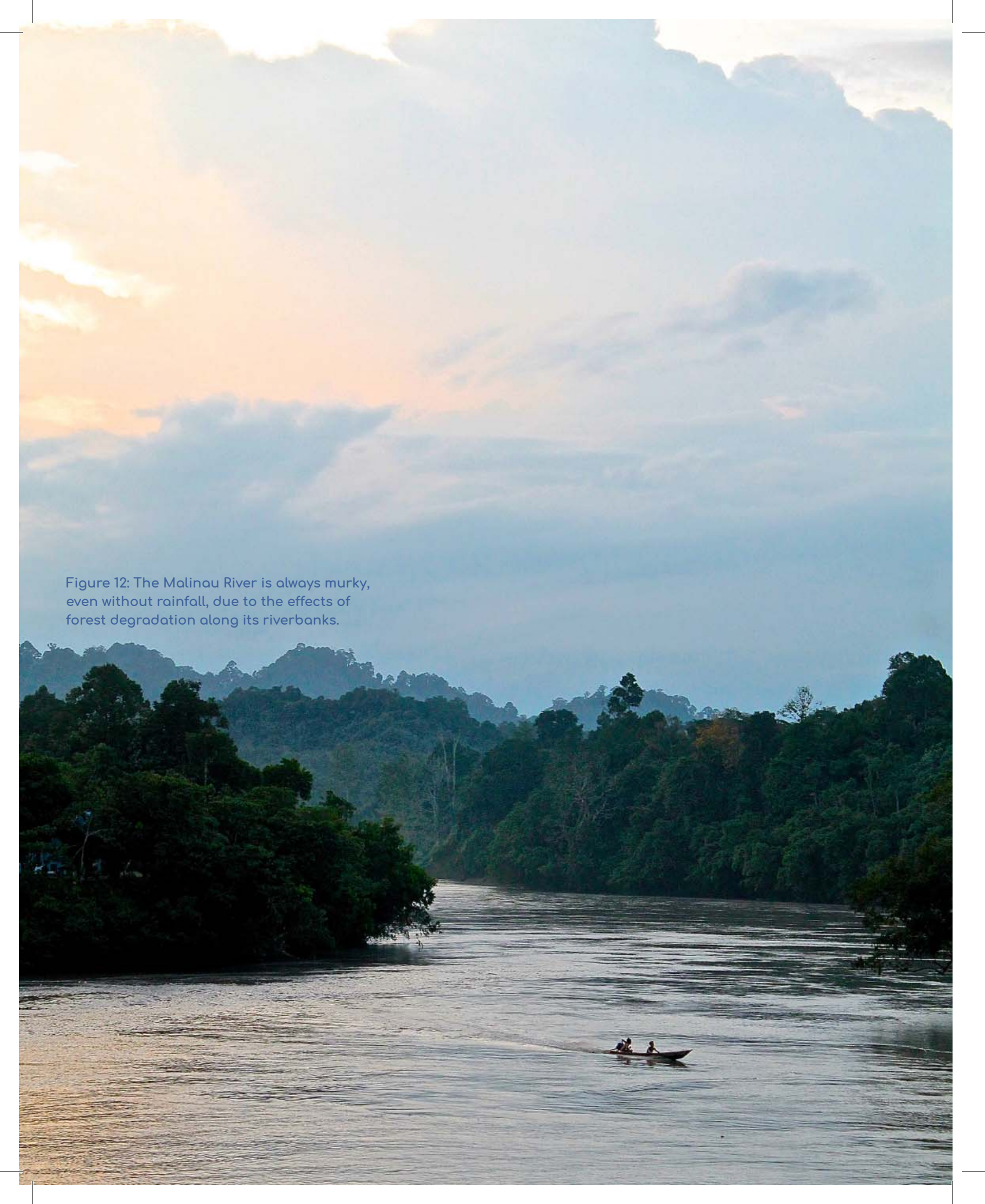
A wide river with murky water, surrounded by dense forest and mountains in the background. A small boat with two people is on the water.

Figure 12: The Malinau River is always murky, even without rainfall, due to the effects of forest degradation along its riverbanks.

between 1999 and 2005) led a discussion as the Oma Lung tribe struggled to make a decision as regards this pressing matter. Charles Kole suggested that the villagers at Setulang should wait to see if the villagers of Setarap and Sentaban prospered after selling their protected forest to the logging companies. If the neighbouring villages became prosperous, then the Oma Lung tribe would follow suit and also sell their protected forest. However, as time passed, the villages of Setarap and Sentaban did not receive any significant benefits from the sale of their forest. In fact, the two villages were left disappointed, as the logging companies did not pay them the full amounts that they had been promised. Promises to build public facilities also remained unfulfilled. The experiences of the Setarap and Sentaban villagers strengthened the resolve of the Oma Lung to keep their protected forests intact, as savings for the future of the tribe. Furthermore, witnessing the constant murkiness of the Malinau River, which was caused by logging activities, the Oma Lung became worried that the Setulang River, their main source of clean water, would suffer the same fate if the forests around it were logged for timber. Overall, however, the period spent waiting for the results of the sold forests at Setarap and Sentaban was a temptation filled one for the Oma Lung tribe.

Ironically, the toughest challenge that emerged during this time came as a result of government regulation. The Provincial Spatial Plan (RTRWP) stated that the protected forest in the upper Setulang River had been owned by the government since 1972. The Oma Lung tribe was thus left hugely disappointed when this regulation was only communicated to them in the year 2003. They felt that official legal status was required in order to ensure that they would not ultimately lose their biological resource bank at Setulang. For the Oma Lung tribe, their forest savings became a key component for their survival and prosperity. Only legal status could prevent the government from issuing the forest utilization and exploitation permits which would lead to the destruction of the protected forest at Setulang. Unfortunately though, at that time, the government did not have any legal instrument with which to regulate the interests of their citizens and which overlapped with the country's forestry interests.

KALPATARU, RETURNING TO THE TANE' OLEN

Fortunately, in the midst of rapid sales of primary forests to forest concession companies, public interest at the national and international levels as regards the unique tradition of reserved forests implemented by the Oma Lung was gaining traction. This helped the Oma Lung tribe gain *defacto* recognition for their protected forest. International organizations then followed suit and offered support and assistance.

FORCLIME is one of the programmes currently providing support to the Oma Lung tribe. The FORCLIME Technical Cooperation is a bilateral program involving the Indonesian and German Governments which addresses the issues of forests and climate change and is being implemented by both the Indonesian Ministry of Environment and Forestry and GIZ. The programme is funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). FORCLIME provides an opportunity for the Oma Lung tribe to participate in training sessions, workshops and seminars in several cities. The tribe has also been given the opportunity to increase its knowledge and skills as regards sustainable forest management. One of the achievements of this international support was the workshop which was held in Long Loreh in 1999 and which was organized by the CIFOR. This workshop provided Setulang with knowledge and hope for the future and helped Charles Kole Adjang to discover that there was a way for the forests around Setulang to obtain legal status. The requirements for obtaining such legal status include the demarcation of village boundaries and forest boundaries, as well as the creation of a village institution responsible for the management of the forest.

The desire of the Oma Lung tribe to obtain legal status for the protected forest at Setulang was very high, and so the tribe approached the village of Setarap in order to negotiate village and forest boundaries. On July 17, 2003, the Oma Lung established a village institution



Figure 13: Charles Kole Adjang in front of photos showing the time he represented the Oma Lung tribe when they received a Kalpataru Award.

which was responsible for the management of the protected forest at Setulang. Regulations required them to name their protected forest, so the tribe organized a discussion in order to help them decide on a name. Referencing their tradition at Long Saan, the Oma Lung chose the name Tane' Olen for the protected forest at Setulang.

Finally, Tane' Olen had once again become the name for the reserved or protected forest owned by the Oma Lung tribe. However, ownership of the forest proved to be somewhat different when compared to the time that the name was used at Long Saan. The village institution responsible for the management of the protected forest at Setulang was named the Tane' Olen Forest Management Board (*Badan Pengelola Hutan Tane' Olen* - BP-HTO) and had a five-year term of office. The establishment of the Tane' Olen Forest Management Board also marked the moment when Setulang Village received the Kalpataru award for its struggle to maintain their customary forest in the midst of the massive sales to forest concession companies.

The 2003 Kalpataru Award was awarded by the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Megawati Soekarno Putri, to the Oma Lung tribe, who were represented by Charles Kole Adjang. That same year, the Oma Lung tribe also became finalists at the Water Contest in Kyoto. Thus, the prophecy of the isij bird during the Oma Lung's migration from Long Saan to Setulang had become a reality. The Oma Lung is now one of the best-known communities in the world in terms of the practice of forest conservation and possesses valuable local knowledge on sustainable forest management. Nowadays, people from all over the world come to Setulang in order to learn about the local wisdom of the Oma Lung tribe and to experience firsthand how they manage their forest.

MAKING A LIVELIHOOD FROM THE TANE' OLEN

The unity of the villagers at Setulang is a key asset in terms of the tribe being able to challenge any external threats that emerge, as well as being able to implement good governance as regards village management and the implementation of the traditional model of forest management known as Tane' Olen. The Oma Lung tribe divides up the relevant tasks appropriately between village institutions and community members, as well as between the elderly and the younger members of the tribe. For example, in terms of maintaining the cleanliness and comfort of the village, every member of the Oma Lung tribe contributes to the routine cleaning of the village. Furthermore, the tribe also still engages in discussions of various village-related issues, even though many of them now lead a more modern way of life.

The Oma Lung tribe is considered prosperous and is able to fulfil its basic needs by working hard in the fields. Indeed, barely a day passes without the tribe engaging in hard work which also includes the elderly members of the community. Around the village, the youth and those still in their productive years are usually to be found busy working in their fields planting rice, yams and cassava. Meanwhile, the elderly tend to their chickens and pineapple plants in their houses. Each family fulfils its basic need for carbohydrates and protein from its crops, as well as from fishing in the river and from hunting in the Tane' Olen



Figure 14: Weaving fan-palm leaves, raising chickens, growing pineapples and scavenging for fern buds are all sources of quick income for the Oma Lung tribe.

forest. Water for drinking and cooking is obtained from springs which can be found within the Tane' Olen and the water is channelled through pipes to every house at Setulang.

The youth and the men of Oma Lung always take the time to collect palm leaves and rattan for their families during their trips to the Tane' Olen forest. The palm leaves and rattan are then woven to make hats, mats and backpacks (which are known as *belanyec*) by the women of the Oma Lung in their free time. During market days, the Oma Lung sells surplus





Figure 15: A wooden stilt house, an Omo Lung woman, her children and a palm leaf hat.



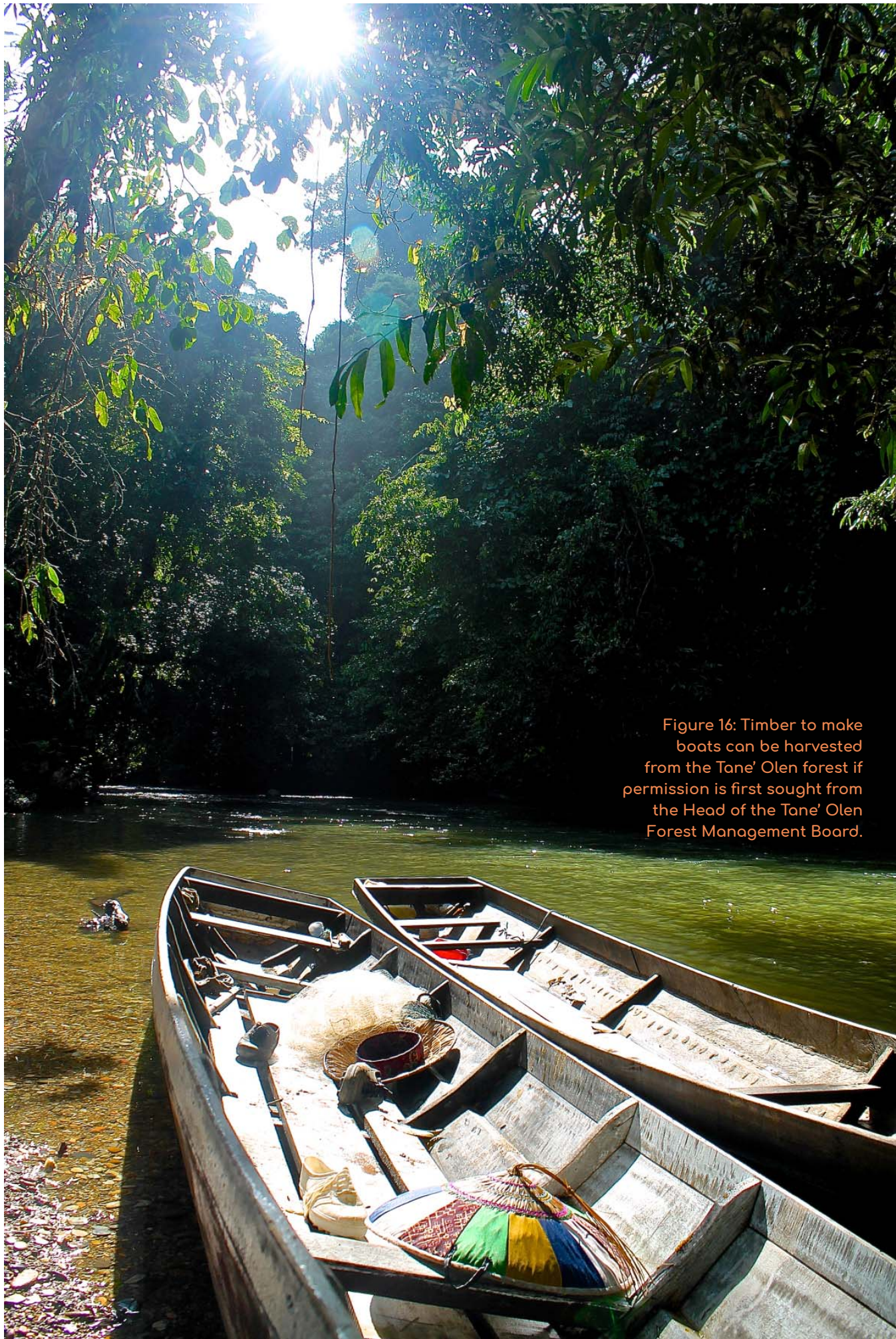


Figure 16: Timber to make boats can be harvested from the Tane' Olen forest if permission is first sought from the Head of the Tane' Olen Forest Management Board.

harvested rice, eggs and pineapples. The tribe also sells handicrafts at Malinau Market. The profits which accrue from their trips to the market provide additional sources of income which can be put towards education and clothing. As a result of all of this economic activity, the Oma Lung tribe has no need or desire to sell its Tane' Olen forest for financial gain.

At Setulang, each Oma Lung family has a stilt house made from wood. The families make their own household appliances from palm leaves and rattan, including baskets, hats for work and mats. When the Oma Lung people gather, they sit on mats placed on the floor of their houses. They don't use tables or chairs, but if a person in their family requires chairs or closets, then they make their own using the wood that they log from the forest. The Oma Lung do not generally use closets however, as they store most of their valuable belongings in rice barns up on the hill in order to avoid losing them in fires. Each Oma Lung family makes its own boat for transportation from wood which they harvest from the Tane' Olen forest, provided that permission for this is first granted by the Head of the Tane' Olen Forest Management Board. Sometimes, nails are not needed to construct these boats, as the Oma Lung tie up the end of each boat with rattan before fastening them with wooden pegs. If they are not able to afford motors for their boats, then they make wooden paddles which they use to row them.

The Oma Lung women generally cook on stoves using firewood that they gather from the secondary forest. Some families already have gas stoves, however, these are not used very often and most of the cooking is still done on wood-burning stoves. The women prefer wood-burning stoves, as the firewood is readily available in the secondary forest and no money is needed. All they have to do is to cut, collect and dry the firewood that they need in their homes.

Meanwhile, the Tane' Olen primary forest provides for most of the basic needs of the Oma Lung tribe, such as drinking water, game, palm leaves, rattan and medicine. The Tane' Olen also provides clear water springs and rivers. Both the Tane' Olen forest and the area's secondary forests have an important place in the lives of the Oma Lung people and it's hardly surprising that the tribe has not been tempted to trade the Tane' Olen for money. Indeed, without the Tane' Olen, there would be no life for the Oma Lung tribe.



Figure 17: Wooden stoves found in the wooden stilt houses of Setulang are vulnerable to fires.



Figure 18: An Oma Lung woman holding a woven hat made from fan-palm leaves.



STRIVING TO RETURN TO THE FOREST'S NATURE

For generations, the Oma Lung people have maintained their natural engagement with the forest with which they live in harmony. The forest means the world to the Oma Lung, however, industrial development has had a negative impact upon this central element of tribal life. Indeed, the Oma Lung can no longer defend the forests on their own and thus, to a certain extent at least, cooperation with those who care about the sustainability of the Earth has become an inevitability.

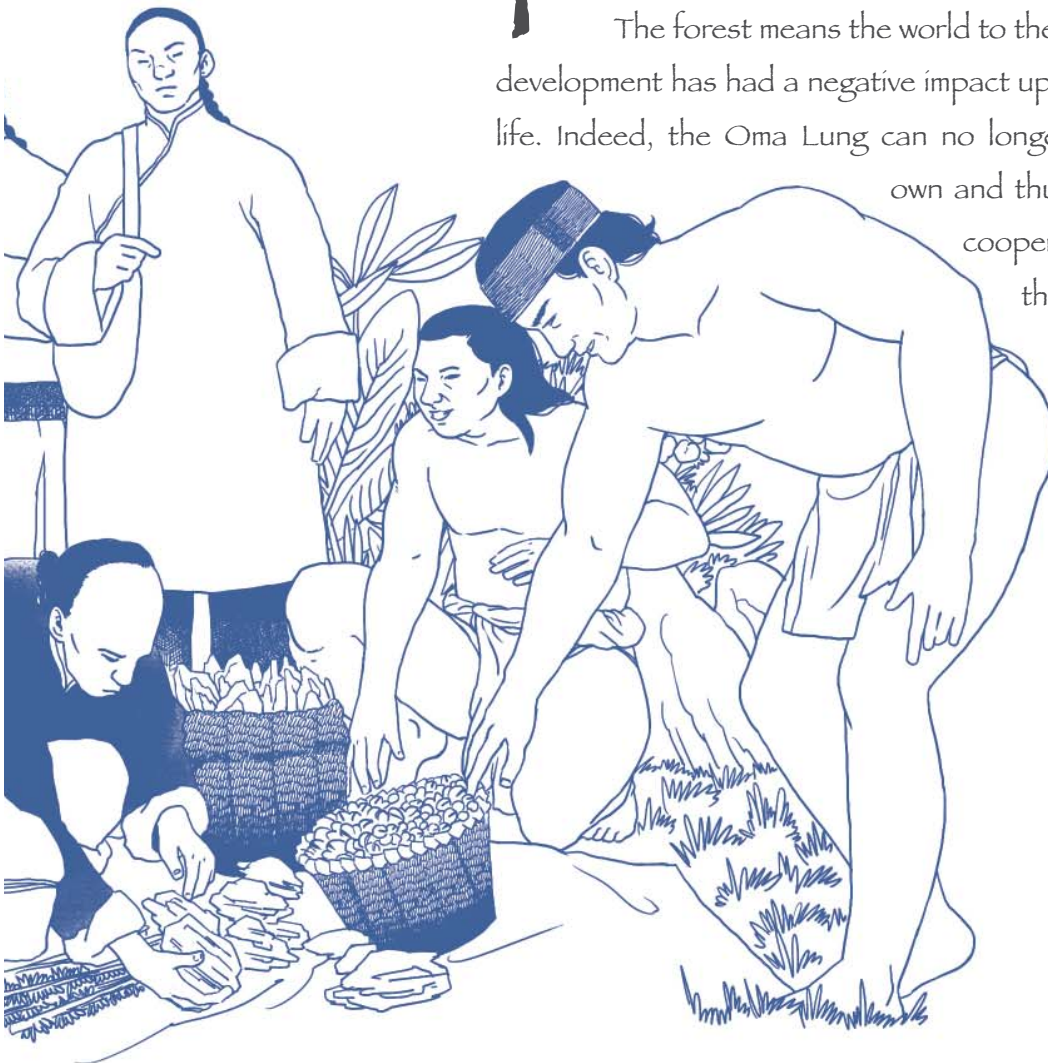


Figure 19: The forest products of Kalimantan have been important trading commodities since ancient times

ECOLOGICAL POLITICS OF THE OMA LUNG TRIBE

Since ancient times, the beaches of Indonesia's islands have been home to markets selling products collected from inland forests. Sriwijaya, Majapahit, Tanjung Selor, Goa and Ternate are all renowned places in which forest products are sold as part of a global marketplace that encompasses Indian, Chinese and Arabic merchants. The increase in demand for forest products was not lost on the tribes living in the forests, and they slowly developed the skills needed to gather and sell these products. In return for their forest products, the tribes received metals, ceramics, beads, calico and salt.³ The Oma Lung of Kalimantan were no exceptions in this context. Moreover, in the past, the utilization of forest products in Kalimantan was still well within the carrying capacity of the forests themselves. This meant that the forests were still able to fully recover from the impacts of human exploitation for economic gains. However, during the twelfth century, the forests, especially those located in Java, started to also be exploited for use in the shipping industry, due to increases in trading activity between China, Champa, Siam, Burma, India and Madagascar.

The forests of Indonesia were exploited extensively during the Dutch colonial era. Indeed, in Java in 1870, the Dutch colonial government published the *Domain Declaration* or *Domein Verklaring* regulation, which stated clearly that all forests were owned by the state and were to be managed by the state. The community's ownership and utilization of the forests were thus limited. The forests of Java were then subsequently exploited in order to meet the demand for wood being made by the ship-building industry, as well as for fuel for machines in sugar factories. Areas of forest were also converted into fields for the cultivation of cocoa, tea, sugar cane and other crops. During the 1920-1930 period of Dutch colonial rule, utilization of the teak forest in Java amounted to between 550,000 and 1.8 million cubic meters per year, which incited resistance from the Samin who lived in the forests of Blora and Bojonegoro. The Dutch colonial government also exported 270,000 cubic meters of timber per year from the forests of Riau to Singapore.⁴ Due to high costs and technological limitations, the Dutch colonial government did not touch the forests of Kalimantan until 1924. Moreover, at this time, exploitation was not on the cards, and the government's activities were restricted to the mapping of primary forests, secondary forests, grasslands and agricultural land in Kalimantan.⁵

Similar to the Dutch colonial government, forests were considered an important source of economic income for the Indonesian government during its early years of development. The Indonesian government inherited the laws which governed the forests from the Dutch colonial government. This meant that, at the time, all forests were owned by the state. The country's forestry regulations were then subsequently formulated and ultimately came to encompass regulations at the levels of both central and regional government.

Historical records reveal that the Indonesian government once owned a total of 112.3 million hectares of forest, which consisted of 29.3 million hectares of protected forests, 19 million hectares of conservation forest and 64 million hectares of production forest.⁶

During the period of the so-called Old Order regime, there was almost no investment in the forestry industry. Indeed, during the course of the 1950s, only a single Japanese company exploited the forests of Kalimantan. Moreover, investment from this Japanese company was ultimately deemed a failure, as it did not provide any significant economic benefits for Indonesia. Meanwhile, from 1963-1967, Indonesia's state-owned forestry company, Perhutani, established seven logging concessions which encompassed a total of 280,000 hectares of forest in East Kalimantan.⁷

Large-scale forest exploitation occurred during the period of the New Order regime. The New Order government passed the Basic Forestry Law (*Undang-Undang Pokok Kehutanan - UUPK*) No.5/1967, which gave the government comprehensive powers over 143 million hectares of forests in Sumatra and Kalimantan. A full 45% of the total area of forest under the government's control was handed over to 20 conglomerates for the purposes of management and exploitation, and this handing over of control took the form of 572 concession permits. During the New Order period, control over the country's forests was granted to high-ranking military officials, government officials, the ruling political party, concession permit holders and institutions such as the Apkindo and Nippindo.⁸ In fact, the political prisons that operated during the New Order period were funded from profits generated through forest exploitation under the control of the Indonesian military.⁹ Meanwhile, traditional communities were stripped of their ownership and rights and the management and utilization of forests was turned over to the government in the 1970s. As a result, and with no resistance from these communities, logging companies thrived.

Through the system of forest concession companies, the New Order earned USD 564 million in 1970, a huge increase over the USD 6 million in income that was generated in 1968. This increase meant that forest products had become the second-largest contributor to the nation's income after crude oil. In 1968, Indonesia became the world's primary producer of

³ Eghenter, C.2001. Towards a casual history of a trade scenario in the interior of East Kalimantan, Indonesia, 1900-1999. In: Bijdragentot de Taal, Landen Volkenkunde 157 (2001), no: 4, Leiden, 739-769

^{4,7,8} Prasetyo, Y.E., Pratama, T.A., Deni. Dinamika pengelolaan (krisis) sumber daya hutan di era perubahan iklim. Bidang Kajian Ekologi-Politik. UPT Balai Besar Pengembangan Teknologi Tepat Guna. Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia. hal.8,9,10.

⁵ Peluso, N.L., Vandergeest, P. 2001. Genealogies of the political forest and customary rights in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand. The Journal of Asian Studies, Vol. 60, No.3. (Aug., 2001), p.782

⁶ Kartodihardjo, H.1999. Hambatan structural pembaharuan kebijakan pembangunan kehutanan di Indonesia: intervensi IMF dan World Bank dalam reformasi kebijakan pembangunan kehutanan. World Resources Institute. hal.4

⁹ Prasetyo, Y.A. 2012. Wawancara Komisi Nasional Hak Asasi Manusia dengan Jenderal Soedomo dalam rangka pencarian fakta kekerasan hak asasi manusia di Indonesia. Komisi Nasional Hak Asasi Manusia. Jakarta.

wooden logs and, during the same year, forest products generated income amounting to USD 2.1 billion for the country. In the 1980s and 1990s, the New Order Government allocated several million hectares of forest for pulp and palm-oil plantations. In 1985, the New Order government received a total of USD 50 billion from the plywood industry. However, the significant increase in the income being generated through forest products, as well as in the number of investors active in the industry, proved to be detrimental to the country's forests and ended up impoverishing the communities living in and around these areas. In reality, the large incomes which were being made by forest concession companies ultimately only amounted to a miniscule 0.1% of the country's budget during the period 1984-1989. This small figure was due to the government's inability to collect taxes, license fees and reforestation fees, hence a large portion of the profits went to the forest concession companies. In 1985, the rate of forest destruction caused by the forest concession companies reached 600,000 to 1.2 million hectares per year. Subsequently, from 1985-1997, the rate of forest destruction increased to 1.7 million hectares per year.¹⁰

In Kalimantan, forest concession companies continued to cause extensive environmental problems and poverty throughout the 1990s. However, the negative impacts that the operations of the forest concession companies were having upon the lives of the people of Kalimantan began to attract national and international attention. Facing pressure from the public, the Indonesian government required forest concession companies to set up village-development programs known as *HPH Bina Desa*. Unfortunately though, these programs largely failed to take into account the traditions of the indigenous peoples of Kalimantan, and many were thus considered failures.

In 1997, the government made an effort to increase the prosperity and levels of participation of the communities living in and around the country's forests by issuing a number of regulations which specifically addressed community forests and the rights of traditional communities as regards collection of non-timber forest products, as well as issues relating to community plantation forests and village forests. The change that was made to the leadership of the country in early 1998 also led to several initiatives which were aimed at improving forestry regulations. This improved the regulatory framework and addressed several past problems which had remained unresolved, such as the legal status of community forests and forest development reform, which reorganized the distribution of forest resources and attempted to eradicate corruption, collusion and nepotism within the forestry industry.¹² Reform of Indonesia's forestry regulations was also undertaken in 2001 and encompassed the reinstating of the rights of traditional communities. For the first time,

¹⁰ Awang, S.A. 2006. *in*: Tolo, EYS. 30 Desember 2013. Sejarah ekonomi politik tata kelola hutan di Indonesia. *Harian Indo Progress*.

¹¹ Zemer, C. 2000. *People, plants, and justice: the politics of nature conservation*. Columbia University Press, New York.

¹² Kartodihardjo, H. 1999. Hambatan struktural pembaharuan kebijakan pembangunan kehutanan di Indonesia: intervensi IMF dan World Bank dalam reformasi kebijakan pembangunan kehutanan. *World Resources Institute*. hal.7.

the country began to acknowledge and document the rights of its traditional communities with regard to their forests.

The central government also transferred rights over the issuance of logging permits to provincial and district governments. Logging permits thus began to be granted to local businessmen, village leaders and district-government elites. Unfortunately, however, provincial and district governments also began to view their forests as a quick solution to their region's economic needs. In Kalimantan, the holders of logging permits quickly approached villages in an attempt to make a grab for their primary forests. Many villages in Kalimantan were tempted to sell their primary forests, which they had inherited from many previous generations. As a result, between 2000 and 2002, forest exploitation as undertaken by Indonesia's regional governments became uncontrollable and once again prompted concerns from the public, both nationally and internationally. The central government then decided to revise the relevant regulations, so as to only allow logging permits to be issued by governments which were able to fulfil certain basic requirements, such as mission readiness and possession of specific institutions for forest management.¹³

In the end, this unsustainable exploitation, which did not take into account the ability of the forests to recover, drew the ire of the public, both in Indonesia and across the world. In the 1980s, the global community began to realize that the world was facing a forestry crisis caused by the widespread, economically driven and unsustainable exploitation of forests. Since then, issues relating to forest conservation, biodiversity, sustainable development and sustainable forest management have been a staple of world politics and policy. Indeed, several loans which were made to Indonesia by international institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank required the country to make improvements as regards the governance of its forests.

THE CONCERNS OF THE OMA LUNG AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

Before the country and the international community understood the importance of forest conservation and sustainable forest management, the Oma Lung tribe of Kalimantan, in accordance with its customs and traditions, had for hundreds of years been dividing up the surrounding forests into conservation zones, production-conservation zones and

¹³ Wollenberg, E., Moeliono, M., Limberg, G. Antara Negara dan Masyarakat: Desentralisasi di Indonesia. in: Moeliono, M., Wollenberg, E., Limberg, G. 2009. Desentralisasi tatakelola hutan: politik, ekonomi dan perjuangan untuk menguasai hutan di Kalimantan, Indonesia. CIFOR, Bogor, Indonesia. hal.17.

production zones. The Oma Lung tribe has long implemented sustainable forest management underpinned by the concept of the Tane' Olen forest as a biological resource bank which can be utilized in the future in order to overcome natural disasters, famine and the various uncertainties which punctuate their lives. However, the ancient knowledge and traditions of the Oma Lung were not previously documented in writing, in contrast with the conservation knowledge held by the scientific community, which has been well documented and which has become the basis of regulations and policies relating to conservation since the 1980s. The knowledge that the Oma Lung possessed was only implemented in their daily lives and passed down from generation to generation. However, the Oma Lung's traditions have undoubtedly proved to be effective in helping them to survive the challenges posed by remote areas deep in the heart of Kalimantan.

Unfortunately, regulations dating from the Dutch colonial period up to the year 2001 ignored the traditions and local wisdom of such communities. As a result, the traditions of longstanding communities as regards sustainable forest management, such as those practised by the Oma Lung, did not have a place in the legal system of forest governance. The state did not allocate any role for traditional communities in the management of forests and instead, the relevant regulations focused only on major investments in the management of state forests. Moreover, in the wake of the integration of the Oma Lung tribe into the village government system, the lack of legal instruments available to integrate the forestry traditions of the traditional communities into the national forestry management system became a threat to the sustainability of the Oma Lung itself.

Fortunately, the Oma Lung's concerns fell into line with those of the national and international communities, as the tribe's concerns regarding the destruction of Kalimantan's forests and the conservation of forest resources increased. During this period, efforts to save the world's forests in a bid to prevent global warming became a prominent issue within the global mainstream, and international institutions began to allocate funds to save the world's forests as part of their efforts to prevent the climate change that was starting to threaten the Earth.

FORCLIME is one of the institutions working on preventing the further destruction of tropical forests and preparing the region for climate change. Since 2010, FORCLIME has been involved in the Heart of Borneo (HoB) Initiative, a collaborative initiative that is being implemented by three nations in Kalimantan: Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam. This initiative promotes the conservation of biodiversity, sustainable development and efforts to increase the welfare of the communities living in the Heart of Borneo, specifically women and those living in poverty.



Figure 20: The Oma Lung tribe source their clean water from springs found in the Tane' Olen forest.

The existence of the Oma Lung tribe, with their Tane' Olen protected forest at Setulang has captivated the minds of an international community that remains focused on the issue of conservation. The Tane' Olen forest management tradition at Setulang was established as a pilot area for the international community's reciprocity program for those who have conserved the forests. The enthusiasm shown by the international community as regards learning the traditions of the Tane' Olen forest ultimately led to the nation and its people becoming aware of and gaining respect for the local wisdom of the traditional communities living within the forests of Kalimantan.

THE VILLAGE FOREST, A NEW SOLUTION TO FOREST TENURE CONFLICT

The conflict of interest between the indigenous community and the Indonesian government as regards the legal status of the forest and forest management rights was finally resolved in 1999 when the government published Article 5 of Law No.41/1999 on Village Forests. Based on this regulation, a village forest is defined as a state-owned forest which is located in or around a village and which is utilized by the village community for its prosperity. This regulation offered a way out of the legal dispute which was threatening the Oma Lung tribe's Tane' Olen forest.





Figure 21: FORCLIME offers support to the community at Setulang Village.

However, at that time, applications for village-forest status still required lengthy processing, as the legal instruments needed in order to implement this new law were not yet in place. In 2008, the Ministry of Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia issued Ministry of Forestry Decree No. P.49/Menhut-II/2008 on Village Forests. This new regulation allowed the indigenous communities, both in and around the forest, to manage and utilize the forests around their villages.

During their efforts to gain legal status for village forests, FORCLIME offered support for the Oma Lung tribe and for the Indonesian government. This support proved helpful during the preparation stage, which addressed the prerequisites and systems required in order to finally put in place a village forest for the Oma Lung tribe at Setulang.

The facilitation process included the dissemination of information regarding the village-forest system to the indigenous communities of East Kalimantan, including the Oma Lung tribe, and this process was undertaken by the District Forestry Service. The Village Head and Tane' Olen Forest Management Board were invited to participate in seminars which were held in Bogor and Samarinda. Meanwhile, in order to comply with various legal requirements for the submission of applications for village-forest status, FORCLIME also assisted the Oma Lung community in the development of village regulations, as well as the establishment of a village-forest management institution, the development of maps of the village and the forests, and the preparation of an annual working plan for the Tane' Olen forest.

In April 2011, the community at Setulang Village sent a proposal to the Regent of Malinau regarding the establishment of the Tane' Olen Setulang village forest at Setulang. Facilitated by the District Forestry Service and FORCLIME, the Regent of Malinau, representing the Malinau District government, submitted the proposal to the Ministry of Forestry. On June 11, 2011, the Setulang Village government finally established the Tane' Olen forest area as a village forest. The village forest continued to be managed by the same entity, the Tane' Olen Forest Management Board. However, this organization changed its name to the Setulang Village Forest Management Body (*Lembaga Pengelola Hutan Desa Setulang – LPHD Setulang*).

For the Oma Lung tribe, the bureaucratic process to gain legal status for the village forest took five years. Initially, based on Ministry Decree 526/Menhut- II/2013, the Setulang Village community was awarded 4,330 hectares of production forest for the village-forest work area and this forest was located in Setulang, Malinau District in East Kalimantan Province. However, due to changes which were made to a number of administrative boundaries, the district of Malinau was moved to the jurisdiction of North Kalimantan Province, which was formed as a result of the division of East Kalimantan. The Indonesian government then subsequently

issued a second decree, Ministry Decree 755/Menhut-II/2014, which revised the first decree so that the Setulang village forest was listed under the jurisdiction of this new province.

Moreover, the size of the Setulang village forest was also revised upwards to 4,415 hectares. Based on the second decree, the Setulang Village Forest Management Body applied to the North Kalimantan Governor for village-forest management rights. However, the North Kalimantan Province Forestry Service, which had only just been formed, was not yet ready to issue the relevant technical review document or any draft Governor's decree on village-forest management, hence, the Governor's decree took a full six months to process. Finally, in 2016, the Governor of North Kalimantan issued Governor's Decree 188.44/K.470/2016, which awarded village-forest management rights over 4,415 hectares to the Tane' Olen Setulang Village Forest Management Body at Setulang.

THE FIRST VILLAGE FOREST IN NORTH KALIMANTAN

The Tane' Olen Setulang Village Forest received its work boundaries from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, which allocated the tribe a full 4,415 hectares. The Tane' Olen forest area is partially located inside an area of state limited production forest and also in an area of protected forest. The Governor's decree mandates that the village-forest management body is required to submit annual work and forest-management plans which are to be developed in collaboration with the related regional government agencies. The holders of village-forest management rights are also prohibited from transferring or changing the status and function of any areas of limited production forest or protected forest.

The Tane' Olen Setulang Village Forest management plan includes provisions on landscape-based protection and sustainable development which prioritize non-timber forest products, environmental services and ecotourism. The Tane' Olen Village Forest is also setting an example for other areas of North Kalimantan in terms of its system of forest management, which is able to maintain cultural traditions and forest sustainability for the overall welfare of the community. However, as of 2017, only Setulang Village had been granted village-forest management rights within the province of North Kalimantan, while the Oma Lung tribe at Setulang was the first ever recipient of village-forest management rights in North Kalimantan.

The Oma Lung can now finally breathe a sigh of relief, as their Tane' Olen now enjoys official legal status as an established village forest. This legal status has strengthened the bond between the Oma Lung tribe and the state, so that the primary forest around the home



Figure 29: The forest provides clean water, fertile soil and good air quality, preserving the oxygen and carbon dioxide cycle for the benefit of life on the Earth



of the tribe can be managed and utilized according to their long-standing traditions, while still conforming to state policy, as it addresses protected forest and areas of limited production forest. This ultimately means that the state has acknowledged that the forest management traditions of the Oma Lung tribe are just as important as investments in the forestry industry.

THE ROAD TO TANE' OLEN ECOTOURISM

The legal status of the Tane' Olen Village Forest is now assured, while an annual work plan has been prepared and is being gradually being implemented. In order to fulfil the various elements of this annual work plan, support from institutions located outside of the North Kalimantan Forestry Service will be required. Moreover, in order to fulfil the tribe's goal of becoming an ecotourism village and a clean water service provider, collaboration with other government institutions will also be required. The North Kalimantan Forestry Service, through the Production Forest Management Unit of Malinau and FORCLIME, has pledged its support to the Setulang Village community and is seeking to create synergies with related government institutions.

The Forestry Service shares its tasks and facilities with other related government agencies and also provides assistance relating to the management of the Tane' Olen forest, including assistance with the prevention of forest fires. Meanwhile, in 2014, the Tourism Service formed the Setulang

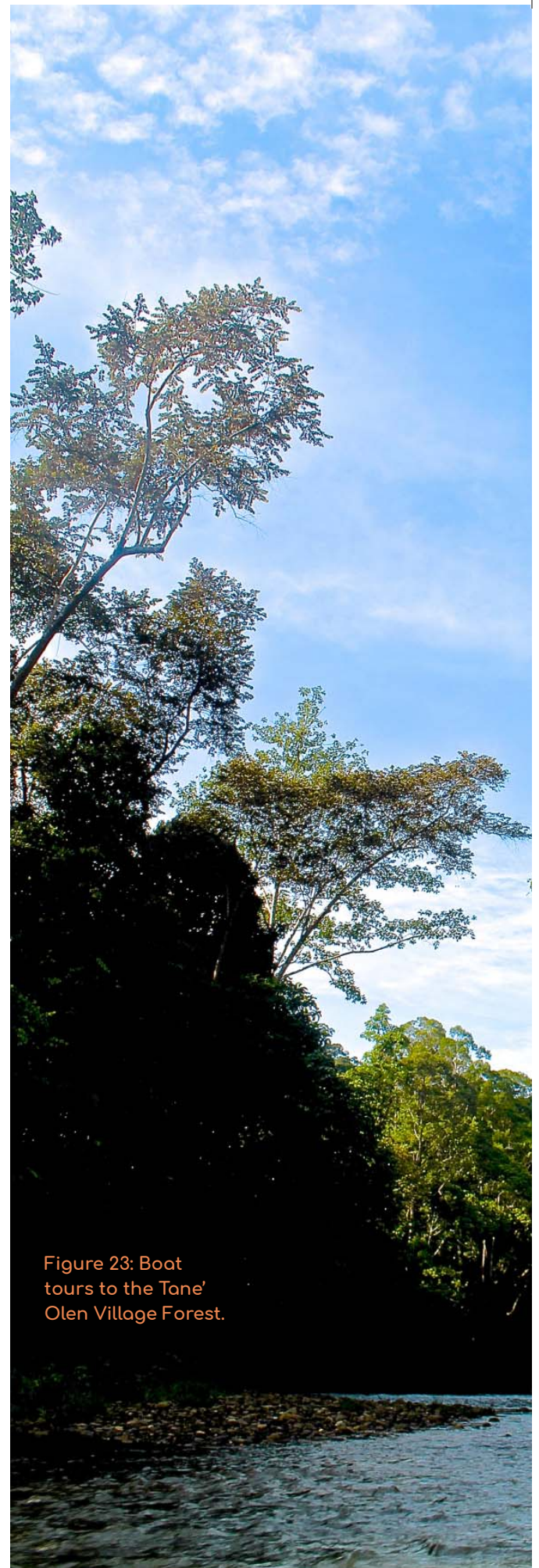


Figure 23: Boat tours to the Tane' Olen Village Forest.



Village Tourism Management Board and began to prepare the village for tourism by providing the Oma Lung tribe with guest hospitality training, funds for cooking utensils, English lessons and a study tour to an ecotourism village in Yogyakarta, which was undertaken by the Setulang Village Tourism Management Board. The Tourism Service also facilitated the construction of infrastructure in order to support tourism at Setulang, including offices for the Village Forest Management Board and the Setulang Village Tourism Management Board. The Public Works Service also developed roads to Setulang, while the Public Health Office, through its chain of community health clinics (*Puskesmas*), held training sessions on sanitation, cleanliness and health. A team of experts was also assigned to collect technical data for the preparation of clean water pipelines, as part of the goal of Setulang Village becoming an ecosystem service provider through the supply of clean water.

CHALLENGES OF AN ECOTOURISM VILLAGE

Basmairan, a representative of the Oma Lung youth and a member of the Setulang Village Tourism Management Board, participated in the study tour to a tourism village in Yogyakarta. The experience he gained during the visit is now being put to use in the management of Setulang's tourism. Basmairan is active in promoting ecotourism at the Tane' Olen forest, as well as cultural tourism at Setulang Village, through social media. Basmairan is also determined

to meet the challenge of creating a tourism package based on the history of the Oma Lung tribe. Over the course of the coming year, Basmairan hopes to share both the traditions and heroic stories of his ancestors as part of boat tours which will transport visitors through the challenging currents of the Setulang River towards the Tane' Olen Village Forest at Setulang.

Tourists from all over the country and indeed the world have now visited the tourist village at Setulang. Local tourists mostly choose to walk around the village and enjoy the traditional dances on display at the Adjang Lidem Customs Hall. Scout camps, school field trips and company outings from Malinau are some examples of the various tourist groups which have visited Setulang Village and enjoyed the varied experiences that it has to offer.

The tourist packages that are offered vary from a hotel package which is priced at IDR 280,000 per night to the Dayak customary dance package which is priced at IDR 550,000 per night. Lodgings at the Oma Lung houses include food prepared from ingredients which are gathered from the fields around Setulang. The Oma Lung cook fern, *umbut* and fresh fish from the Tane' Olen forest and season them with salt and *beke* leaves. The food, which is prepared directly from nature, offers an adventure which can only be found in the uniqueness of the rivers, soil and sun at Setulang.

Tourists from foreign countries usually prefer to explore the tropical rainforest and choose to spend most of their time in the Tane' Olen Village Forest. They spend their nights inside the forest while learning the local forest customs of the Oma Lung. January is the peak season for foreign tourists and, to date, at least 500 foreign tourists from different backgrounds and with differing interests have already visited the Tane' Olen Village Forest.

Ecotourism in the Setulang Tane' Olen forest is well underway then, however, administratively, it has not been managed well so far. The available services are limited to the requests of the tourists, while limited access to telecommunications and the internet was still a major communications hurdle throughout 2017. Meanwhile, however, Malinau and Setulang are already well connected by paved roads, although a lack of public transportation forces tourists to rely on private vehicles.

TANE' OLEN AND THE VILLAGE ECONOMY

The Tane' Olen, in and of itself, represents a challenge for the management body at Setulang Village. Hansicov Kole, Village Head for the 2017-2023 period, views the defence of

agarwood trees from illegal logging as the main challenge that will have to be met over the coming years. Other challenges which are of concern for the Setulang Village Head include the monitoring of the Tane' Olen Village Forest boundaries, infrastructure relating to forest security and diversification of income for the Oma Lung tribe. Currently, Setulang Village is collaborating with the Production Forest Management Unit of Malinau in order to secure the Setulang forest area from the threat of illegal logging and forest fires.

Grappling with the community's increasing financial needs and also attempting to decrease pressure on the Tane' Olen Village Forest, Hansicov is planning to develop vegetable gardens and also to plant coffee in Setulang. Vegetables such as yams, kale, ferns, young coconut trunks and bamboo shoots, which are either grown by the local community or collected from the nearby secondary lavenj forest, have become a quick source of income for the village community.

Cultivation of Robusta and Liberica coffee is also starting to generate income for the Oma Lung tribe, although only a few members of the community are currently growing coffee. In 1980, only around 50 families were growing coffee in their fields around the Malinau River. At the time, around half of a sack of coffee beans could be harvested per week. However, due to the community's lack of knowledge regarding coffee cultivation, as well as the poor quality of the post-harvest preparation process and pollution in the Malinau River from the coal industry, it has proved difficult for coffee plants to survive here and, as a result, coffee production has decreased.

Workshops on coffee cultivation organized by FORCLIME are now inspiring the Oma Lung tribe to recommence coffee cultivation in their village, as the sale of coffee and rice are providing an income boost for the tribe. The sale of vegetables and coffee within Setulang is still dependent on private vehicles, however, as they represent the only mode of transportation between Setulang and Malinau.

The challenges facing the Tane' Olen forest are not simply limited to village boundaries, however. The geological conditions that prevail within Malinau District, which boasts large deposits of coal, may ultimately have an impact upon the Tane' Olen forest in the future. Such potential future impact needs to be anticipated and addressed, as Setulang Village is surrounded by areas designated for coal mines. Waste from these mines has already polluted the Malinau River as a result of technical problems occurring with the mines' waste disposal systems. During periods of rain, water from the polluted Malinau River overflows and pollutes the Setulang River and this threatens the habitats of fish, pollutes drinking and bathing water, and can also have an impact upon agriculture within Setulang Village.

TANE' OLEN FOR THE YOUNGER GENERATION

In the past, the children of the Oma Lung learned of the customs of their ancestors through the tradition of storytelling which took place within the tribe's longhouses. Moreover, some of these children have inherited the skills required for roaming the forest and piloting boats along the river as, since early childhood, they have followed their parents to their fields in order to work, as well as to the forest in order to scavenge. However, with increased access to education and work opportunities outside the agricultural sector, knowledge and skills relating to forest products are rarely brought up in day-to-day family discussions these days.

When asked, several of the tribe's teenagers stated that they did not learn about the uniqueness of the Tane' Olen Village Forest from either their school or parents. This lack of knowledge is especially prevalent in kids whose parents work outside the agricultural sector. The teenagers who are the least aware of the uniqueness of the Tane' Olen forest and who lack the skills to weave palm leaves and rattan tend to be the ones whose parents have stopped weaving at home. However, the Oma Lung teenagers are highly active within the realm of traditional dances and the creation of art in order to welcome tourists. Traditional dances and other art-related activities have thus become ways of communicating the wisdom of the Tane' Olen forest to the youth of the Oma Lung. For example, the history and wisdom of the Oma Lung tribe and the Tane' Olen forest can be delivered in the form of an opera or play, which are generally greatly appreciated by the youth.

The weaving skill of the Oma Lung tribe has the potential to meet modern tastes for high fashion. However, collaboration with prominent designers will be required in order to ensure that the weaving that is produced by the Oma Lung is maintained at a high quality and is able to fulfil the needs of the target market. If the weaving skills of the Oma Lung people are preserved and can find a niche within the modern marketplace, then dependence on the Tane' Olen forest will continue and the forest will still have meaning for subsequent generations.

TANE' OLEN IN THE FUTURE

Throughout its history, the Oma Lung tribe has borne witness to the power of the funding which has been used in order to exploit the forest, with no regard being given for the people who live in and around the forest and who depend on its resources in order to survive. However, in the midst of such widespread economic exploitation, the Oma Lung tribe has been able to stay loyal to its traditions, so that the Tane' Olen forest's resources are shared evenly among the community and are also conserved for future generations.



Figure 24: A young indigenous dancer

For hundreds of years, the Oma Lung people have understood that nature needs time to heal itself after human exploitation. The tribe's loyalty to the traditions that support conservation has allowed it to fulfil its basic needs to this day, and its people are both prosperous and happy with the way of life that they have chosen.

Meanwhile, the global community is increasingly coming to realize the vital role that forests play in terms of the sustainability of life on Earth. Consciously or unconsciously, from generation to generation, humans all across the globe have depended on the forest. Furthermore, despite the fact that people have tended to build civilizations away from the forest, we all ultimately still depend on the forest for its role in the oxygen carbon-dioxide cycle and in preserving the quality of soil, water and air in the wider environment. The forest, at the end of the day, plays an important but often undervalued and sometimes intangible role in human society.

The Oma Lung tribe's dependence on its own forests will continue. The Tane' Olen tradition will also continue to face challenges in the future which may differ significantly from the challenges faced today and in the past. Charles Kole Adjang, as the Head of the Tane' Olen Village Forest Management Board, cannot predict whether the Tane' Olen tradition will still be valued by the generations to come. However, he is satisfied that past generations of the Oma Lung tribe have made significant efforts to preserve the balance between the tribe's association with its forests and the life of the global community.

For the youth at Setulang, local awareness and wisdom in terms of the forest are no longer considered essential knowledge required in order to survive. With the ever-increasing influence of modern life, the forest is inevitably becoming a smaller and smaller entity in the daily lives of the Oma Lung youth. Furthermore, the ease and convenience of modern transportation and communications have diminished the relationship between the Oma Lung tribe and the forest. The Oma Lung youths no longer have to walk or row through the forest when travelling out of the village.

As a result, the Oma Lung youngsters are not required to pay attention to the various signs of nature as they manifest themselves through plants, animals and the river that runs through the forest. Inevitably then, the sensitivity of the younger members of the tribe in terms of their ability to understand their environment has decreased. Nature's message, as delivered by the isij bird in the time of Adjang Lidem, may not be heard anymore and the sound of deer will no longer be considered a sign of danger. In accepting these changing times, the customary chiefs of the Oma Lung tribe can only hope that the tribe's next generation will be able to find their own way. However, deep down, their true desire is to witness this new generation keeping the traditions and wisdom of the Oma Lung tribe alive and thus living in true harmony with nature.

Hoííí...Entasoecngenjdeki'icleto
Ngencen ngenjtea
Rare tozo telao segneta'e janenj bada amen te'a
Felaghi melese ke abeng ko'o bada salek amen
Jagek-jagek le ku raam fengasej ku
Jagek ne amen jaat ne fala ighu
Afane tozo teleng salek taeng ne nozo fala ighu

Ahoy youth!
Listen and see
The sound of deer from the right side is a sign of good to come
The eagle's flight, against the clock, bad tidings are at hand
Beware of where your steps lead you
Don't fly against the isij bird's path
Otherwise Keriang* will shed tears in the dusk

*a type of noisy insect



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MAP

TANE' OLEN



Tane' Olen
Primary
Forest

Secondary
Forest

Adjang
Lidem
Customs
Hall

Long House

Football Field

Mountains
and Hills

Bridge

Public Toilet

Road

Dock

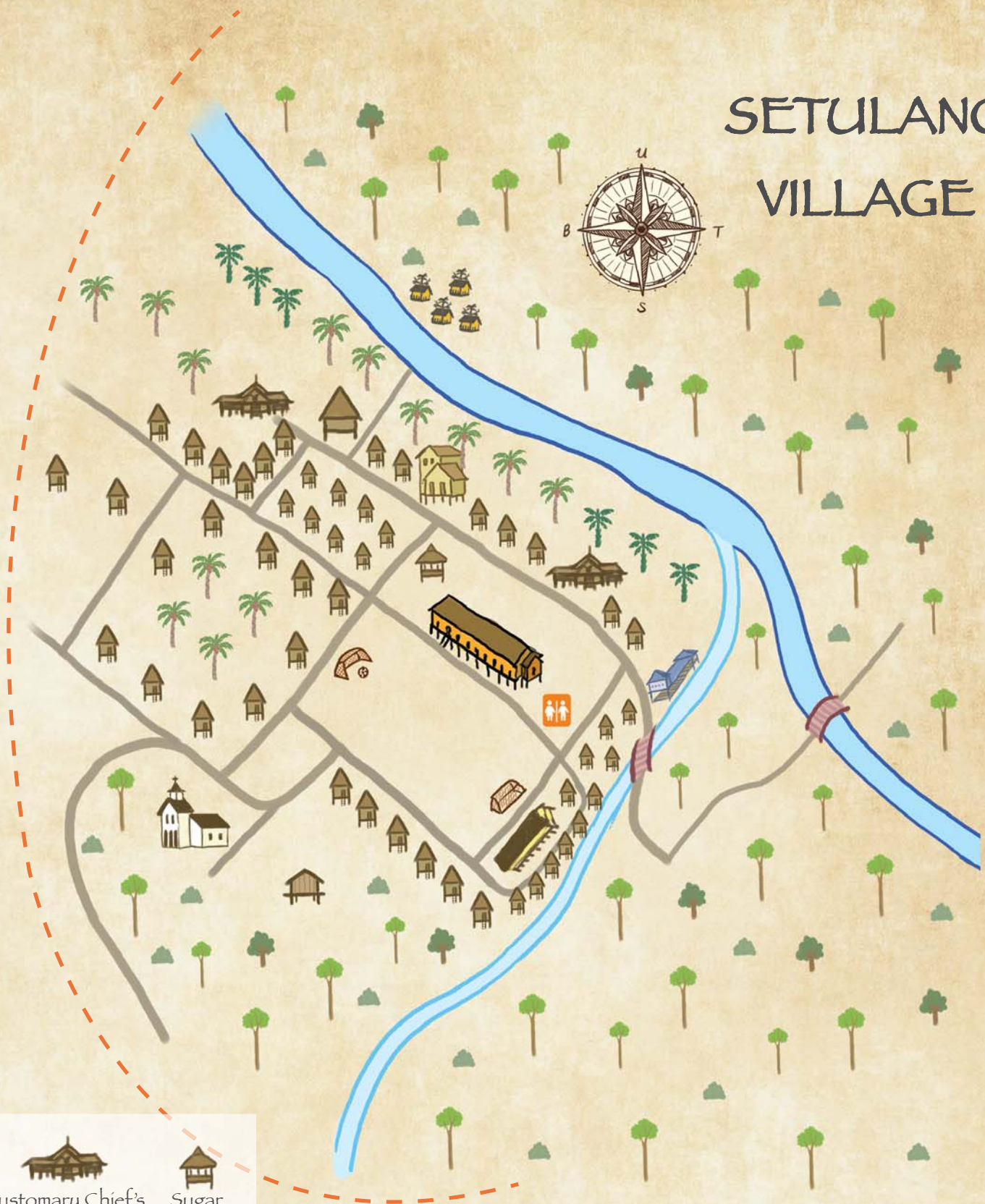
River

Setulang Village

Setulang

Setulang

SETULANG VILLAGE



Customary Chief's House

Sugar Cane Mill

Rice Mill

Hostel

Cemetery

Church

Sentaban Village

Long Bila Village

Setarap Village

Punan Setarap Village

Research Post







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