

LEARN AT **CHESTERZOO**

SUSTAINABLE PALM OIL CASE STUDY

Teachers' Notes

Introduction question – before reading case study

The South East Asian island of Borneo is found at $0^{\circ}50'N$ $114^{\circ}33'E$ and Sumatra is found at $0^{\circ}50'S$ $102^{\circ}30'E$. Find these regions on your map. Which biome would you expect to find dominating at these locations?

Tropical Rainforest

Read these case-study Act for Wildlife blogs and use the free palm oil online resources on the learning pages of our website.

<https://www.actforwildlife.org.uk/conservation-news/orangutans-sustainable-palm-oil/>

<https://www.actforwildlife.org.uk/conservation-news/new-species-orangutan-confirmed/>

<https://www.actforwildlife.org.uk/conservation-news/sustainable-oil-palm-plantation/>

<http://www.chesterzoo.org/education/learningresources>

Describe the major threats currently facing the habitat of Borneo and Sumatra. What effects are these having on the biodiversity of these islands?

85% of palm oil is grown in Indonesia and Malaysia. Habitat loss, fragmentation due to forests being turned into agricultural, mining or infrastructure development sites, potential inbreeding isolation, road construction, human-wildlife conflict, and hunting for bushmeat and wildlife trade. Bornean Orangutan populations have suffered a 25% decline over the past 10 years.

LEARN AT CHESTER ZOO

“Protecting areas of the Orangutans’ rainforest habitat is the most important conservation action to save these species.” To what extent do you agree/disagree with this statement? Provide evidence for your answer.

Orangutans are facing high threats due to the protected areas small sizes and their lack of connectivity. Maintaining high forest cover and improving connectivity among remaining forest patches is crucial to increase Orangutan survival. Due to the extent of unsustainable oil palm plantations developed in the region, the oil palm industry is a key player to engage with to solve these challenges.

Describe why boycotting palm oil all together is not a viable conservation strategy.

Because palm oil is efficient, versatile and high yielding, it has become the world’s most widely used vegetable oil and global consumption is rising. Getting rid of palm oil completely is not a solution as many local communities rely heavily on palm oil for their livelihood.

Give three examples of ways Chester Zoo is involved in conservation efforts in South East Asia. Include one local event, one European aim and one Orangutan conservation method.

1. Creating a demand in the UK for sustainable palm oil through the Sustainable Palm Oil Challenge and have recently launched a new project working to make Chester a Sustainable Palm Oil City. Encouraging more businesses in the region to sign up to this challenge. Through the sustainable palm oil campaign, are celebrating the companies who are already committed to 100% Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) certified sustainable palm oil, supporting those that want to be sustainable and making it easier for people to choose sustainable palm oil products.

2. An alliance of UK industry associations and NGOs have recently signed the Commitment to Support 100% Sustainable Palm Oil in Europe by 2020. The Roundtable joins various European private sector organizations in support of this commitment. This UK alliance can make an important contribution to the efforts of the private sector across Europe to remove deforestation from their supply chains, and to ensure fully sustainable palm oil supply chains by 2020. BIAZA, the professional body representing the best zoos and aquariums in the UK and Ireland, is a member of the alliance.

3. Working on the ground in Sabah, Malaysia, with partner HUTAN to develop solutions to counter the effect of habitat fragmentation and deforestation and reconnect the fragmented landscape. Support includes reforestation activities, Orangutan ecology research and installing Orangutan bridges to facilitate the movement of these Critically Endangered primates.

From the sources provided, list four standards required for RSPO certified sustainable palm oil status.

A certified sustainable plantation must have met certain environmental, social and economic standards; some of these you may encounter include:

- Original land did not contain significant biodiversity or wildlife*
- Plantation owners communicated with local people and gained free, prior and informed consent to new planting*
- Habitat for wildlife is maintained or replanted to create habitat corridors*
- Fair pay for workers*
- Human rights are respected*
- Childcare facilities provided for workers’ families*
- Environmental footprint reduced*