SIBERUT
CONSERVATION PROGRAMME

# Project description

## Survey of the primate community of peat swamp forests on Siberut, Mentawai Island (Indonesia)

Although Southeast Asia harbours most of the world's tropical peatlands, relatively little is known about the primate communities of the associated habitat – the peat swamp forest. To better understand the role of tropical peat swamp forests for the conservation of primates in general, and for Mentawai Islands' endemic species in particular, we conducted a line transect survey in a 12.5 km² section of peat swamp forest in northern Siberut. A total of 215 records of all four Siberut primates (Kloss's Gibbon *Hylobates klossii*, Mentawai Leaf Monkey *Presbytis potenziani*, Siberut Macacque *Macaca siberu*, and Pig-tailed Langur *Simias concolor*) were obtained. Pig-tailed Langurs (65.5 individuals/km², 95% C.I.: 41.9 – 102.6 inds./km²) and Siberut Macaques (35.8 inds./km², 95% C.I.: 25.5 – 50.4) were the most common species, having density estimates similar to (Pig-tailed Langur) or greater (Siberut Macaque) than those from adjacent lowland rainforest on mineral soil. Density estimates of the Mentawai Leaf Monkey (2.7 inds./km²; C.I. = 1.3 – 5.3 inds./km²) were ca. one-third and of the Kloss's Gibbon (1.0 inds./km²; C.I. = 0.3 – 2.8) one tenth that of the adjacent forest type. Assuming that resource density and diversity in peat swamp forest is lower, primate densities appear to be relatively high with overall primate biomass (881 kg/km²) even exceeding values from lowland rainforest on mineral soil. Our results underline the general importance peat swamp forests may have for Southeast Asian primates and for two island endemic species in particular.