

Research shows 550 sun bears in Harapan Rainforest

Title We have just completed our first Malayan Sun Bear research project, funded by the International Bear Association. The sun bear is the smallest bear in the world and one of the globally threatened mammals found in Harapan Rainforest. It gets its name from the golden disc of fur on its chest. Its name in Indonesia is *beruang*, meaning 'having money', comparing the disc to a golden coin. This has been an exciting project, with the automatic cameras, triggered when an animal walks in front, taking over 300 photos of bears. We can now identify places used by sun bears and areas where they are not found. We can then compare that information with the different types of forest at Harapan Rainforest. We have found that there are about 550 sunbears in the forest, making it an important site for them. The sun bear is the least studied of the eight bear species worldwide and there is very little information about sun bears in Sumatra. Our study will be important for protecting them. We hope this is the beginning for Harapan Rainforest as a centre of sun bear research in Sumatra.