

(Week beginning 23rd March)

Lent prayers

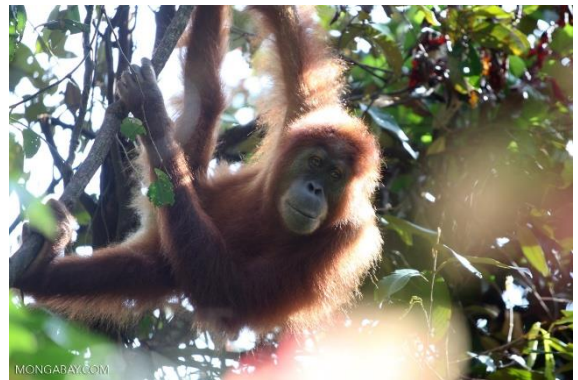
‘The heavens are yours, and yours also the earth; you founded the world and all that is in it.’

Psalms 89:11

As we continue during Lent to pray for overseas environment projects, this week we invite you to pray for the work of all the organisations protecting the Leuser Ecosystem on the Indonesian island of Sumatra, including the Leuser Conservation Forum (FKL), Sumatran Rhino Rescue and Global Conservation.

What are they protecting?

- 6 million acres of tropical rainforests with an exceptional diversity of plants (over 10 000 species) and animals, 22 of which are found nowhere else including the Sumatran elephant, tiger and rhino. This has led conservationists to call Leuser one of the “world’s most irreplaceable protected areas”.
- It provides clean drinking water and food for 4 million people.
- It slows down climate change by storing 1.5 billion tonnes of carbon.



Why does it need protecting?

- It is a ‘UNESCO World Heritage Site in Danger’: one fifth of the protected lowland forests have been destroyed in the past five years by illegal logging, mining, roadbuilding, and oil palm plantations.
- The wildlife is threatened by loss of habitat and poaching.

What are they doing to protect it?

- Clearing illegal oil palm plantations to allow the forest to naturally regenerate with the return of tigers, orangutans and sun bears (which happens in as little as three to four years).
 - 28 teams of FKL rangers patrol and use drones and satellite communication. Poaching has decreased by up to 90% in some areas.



- A breeding programme for the Sumatran rhino
- Providing employment and education in alternatives to poaching and illegal logging. Overall, illegal logging has decreased by 20% in recent years.
- Providing legal support, investigative journalism and lobbying to ensure continued government protection of the rainforest.