

HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICT IN TABIN WILDLIFE RESERVE, LAHAD DATU, SABAH

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ABSTRACT

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Tabin Wildlife Reserve is almost all surrounded by the rapid development of oil palm plantation. Inevitably, the freedom and space for survival of many wild animals in the reserve are being questioned. The availability of food from oil palm plantation attracted wild animals to visit the estate area to forage there. The study was done mainly to identify the possible existence of conflict between people around Tabin Wildlife Reserve and the wildlife. The study involved villagers living adjacent to the Reserve boundary. By a similar aim of using questionnaire, estate workers were asked to fill in questionnaires while the villagers were interviewed directly. The human-wildlife conflict in TWR was identified based on the existence of crop raiding. Increased monetary losses and number of recorded intrusion as well as respondent's perception on wildlife raiding supported the existence of the conflict. Whereas, socio-demographic factor, viz: job grouping and work responsibility are the factors that influence respondent to say that they have problem with animals. The result showed that of 42 estate workers, 30 of them responded to the existence of conflict between people with wildlife in TWR. To the estate worker, crop raiding are the main problem for them. As for the 26 villagers interviewed, a safety concern from pirates and wild animals are their main threats. Four main pest crops identified were elephant, wildboar, rats and macaques (long-tailed and pig-tailed macaque). The average crop damage, mainly from elephant was about RM3403 per month for elephant in the estate, while the villagers estimated around RM100 per month mainly caused by wildboar and other smaller pests. Several conflict resolutions were suggested through this study. These include doing conservation-based project with local communities, maintaining physical approaches and practicing benefit-sharing activities.