

# Emergency appeal launched to combat rise in elephant poaching

June 27 2014, by Robin Loveridge

---



An emergency appeal has been launched by the Rapid Response Facility (RRF) for local conservation group HAKA, in response to a significant increase in poaching of Sumatran elephants in Aceh, Indonesia.

The [tropical forests](#) of the Leuser Ecosystem in northern Sumatra, Indonesia, part of a designated World Heritage Site in Danger, currently support approximately 500 Sumatran elephants.

But [conservationists](#) fear that an increase in poaching could drive this number down even further.

This Critically Endangered species is already suffering badly from the loss, damage and fragmentation of its forest home with almost 70% of suitable habitat destroyed in the last 25 years alone.

But habitat loss is not the only threat to these animals – poaching too is on the rise.

In the first five months of this year, local conservation group HAKA has found and destroyed 139 snares – already more than in the whole of 2013.

Field data shows that in the dry season poaching and snare-setting increases dramatically.

This means that poaching looks set to get worse very soon. The critical period for deploying more ranger protection patrols begins on 30 June.

The fragmentation of elephant habitat means that many of the remaining forest blocks are too small to sustain elephant populations, which is increasing conflict between humans and elephants as these animals come into contact with human settlements and farmland.

In extreme cases, elephants may be killed in retaliation for crop raiding, property damage or injury.

Limited forest cover also means that elephants can easily be trapped in small areas, making them easier targets for poachers.

With Ramadan beginning in late June, there is an urgent need to step up protection to safeguard Sumatran elephants against this deadly threat to their survival.

The Rapid Response Facility (RRF) is therefore launching an emergency

appeal to support patrol teams from local conservation group HAKA.

The appeal will allow the HAKA teams (made up of local community members and trained conservation professionals) to carry out essential patrols in the Leuser ecosystem throughout July, to remove snares from this key Sumatran elephant corridor during the most intense hunting period.

**More information:** [www.justgiving.com/sumatranelephantemergency/](http://www.justgiving.com/sumatranelephantemergency/)

Provided by Fauna & Flora International

Citation: Emergency appeal launched to combat rise in elephant poaching (2014, June 27)  
retrieved 3 May 2024 from  
<https://phys.org/news/2014-06-emergency-appeal-combat-elephant-poaching.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.