Silent Forest Campaign Project update

Project name: Prigen Conservation Breeding Ark (PCBA): Songbird breeding facilities
Project partners: KASI Foundation
Date: 12/12/2019
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1. **What project-related developments, either directly or indirectly, took place the past months (in the field, press/media, research outcomes, local community and unforeseen circumstances?) (Max. 300 words)**

   Within the past months the third bird breeding complex (46 smaller to mid-sized aviaries) was finished, and major progress was achieved regarding the construction of the fourth songbird breeding complex. This complex, to be completed in January 2020 is comprised of 11 smaller aviaries (2.5m×2.5m×3m) to house birds like Javan Magpie Starling and Leafbirds. These aviaries are equipped with sliding doors, so all of them can be connected to allow us to work more flexible with species which social structure might not yet be fully understood.
   In addition the complex also includes 11 aviaries with the dimensions of 7m×2.5m×5m. These large and high aviaries will allow sensitive species such as hill mynas and certain species of laughing thrush to keep distance to keepers and feel more secure and relaxed.

Complex 3 offers flexible housing for various birds

Complex 4, close to the finishing touch

The Javan subspecies of the Orange-headed Thrush (*Geokichla citrina rubecula*) was added the breeding program, as this taxon is close to extinction in the wild and its survival depended largely on captive breeding by Indonesian hobbyists so far, but fashion in the hobbyist community seems to shift to 'new' species, so the captive population also now is in decline.

2. Can you please give us a short status update on objectives and goals you specified in your project proposal?

Create a good standard aviary complex that will support the successful breeding program of the listed species of songbirds in healthy, genetically sound populations to ensure the release of captive-bred birds in their natural habitat.

The construction of high standard breeding aviaries is ongoing. As of now 96 aviaries in three complexes are completed and stocked with breeding pairs of the various target species, and, as mentioned, another 22 aviaries will be ready for use within the next four to five weeks. Where already finished, we can clearly see that the concept is working and many species are starting to breed well.

Establish husbandry guidelines in collaboration with government, associations and universitie.

Data collection is ongoing, and knowledge gained from daily observations is already applied to fine-tune captive management. Already we see increasingly successful breeding attempts as a result, and ten species and subspecies have successfully raised chicks during the last four months. These almost certainly, include two 'world first' captive breeding attempts (see below), and breeding successes with 'difficult' species that very rarely have ever breed under human care (such as the Javan White-eye, of which two pairs have raised chicks in recent months and more pairs are presently nesting)

Develop and maintain a captive population of songbirds with other parties concerning songbird species conservation to ensure viable songbird population in the wild against extinction.

We are still in the phase of building up our the stock in Prigen (about 250 specimens of 22 species at present) , and network with a number of Indonesian partners to ensure the long term viability of our songbird population.

Collaborate with all related parties to develop public awareness programs in having a more effective, comprehensive, and significant conservation result.

First steps towards a far reaching public awareness program have been made. In collaboration with the KASI foundation education planning to target indonesian kids and young adult to increase their knowledge about songbirds and their plight is taking place.

Fulfil the local demands for these threatened songbirds through captive populations and transfer some of the above listed species of songbirds to other institutions and zoos involved and supporting this global program, technically as well as financially.

We are supporting songbird breeding attempts in other institutions by giving advise and ideas, but no birds have been moved to other institutions yet, as that will only happen once around half a dozen pairs or more of each target species reliably bred here, and that stage has not been reached yet (remember that ground was broken at the breeding center less than three years ago and most species have only been set up for breeding within the last one to two years).

3. What activities are planned/ scheduled for the next three months? (Max. 300 words)

We will be completing breeding complex No. 4 within the next few weeks and move in birds in January 2020.
As soon as this has happened, we will start with the construction of the fifth songbird breeding complex. This complex will be comprised of 26 aviaries for smaller and mid-sized birds. Again all aviaries will be connectable via slide doors, to give us the opportunity to work more specifically with species like *Chloropsis sp*. where the key to successful breeding still remains largely a mystery.
Additionally, planning of the sixth songbird complex (36 aviaries) will enter the final stage, and construction will commence as soon as complex five is finished. Funding to construct these additional two complexes has already been secured. A seventh complex with another 16 aviaries is in the early planning stage.
With each complex finished we are gaining vital space for breeding pairs, that means in the next few months we will be able to move numerous additional pairs from temporary holding to breeding aviaries, which in return will hopefully lead to a significant increase in breeding especially in species which we haven't bred successfully yet.

4. Other information to share with the public related to the project (Max. 300 words)

Within the last months and weeks we achieved some remarkable breeding successes. Most important might be the breeding of *Zosterops sp. Wangi-Wangi* and Maratua Shama *Kittacincla (m.) barbouri*. Both taxa most likely have never before been bred in captivity and both seem to be in imminent danger of extinction. In fact the Maratua Shama might already be extinct in the wild (a bird survey of the 28 sqkm Maruatua island in 2011 found no evidence of the survival of the shama) with only a tiny captive population (seven adults and the chick raised in December 2019) existing at the PCBA.

The Wangi-Wangi White-eye is yet to be scientifically described, but already in danger due to intensive trapping for the Javan cage bird trade and tourism development of their small island home (just approx. one sgkm of degraded forest near Wangi Wangi airport on Wangi Wangi Island in the Tukangbesi archipelago, south of Sulawesi).

The world's first captive-bred Wangi-Wangi White-eye, hatched at the PCBA

Our first Javan White-eye fledgeling

The very first Maratua Shama chick, hatched and raised at the PCBA