Tackling the Songbird Trade - The Wak Gatak Songbird Rescue and Rehabilitation Center



Supported by the **EAZA Silent Forest Group**

Final Report

Tacking the Songbird Trade in West Kalimantan, Indonesia

Planet Indonesia -

Wak Gatak Songbird Rescue and Rehabilitation Center

November 2020 - November 2021





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1. Executive Summary

The <u>Wak Gatak Songbird Rescue and Rehabilitation Center</u> will be the first of its kind in Kalimantan, Indonesia. The aim of this songbird rescue center is to provide the mechanisms to safeguard the well-being of songbirds rescued from the wildlife trade and rehabilitate them for release back into their natural habitats whenever possible. The EAZA Silent Forest Campaign has been a key supporter of the development of the Wak Gatak Songbird Rescue Center that will enable us to achieve this aim.

This report provides a final progress update for the project titled 'Tackling the Songbird Trade Indonesia' supported by the EAZA Silent Forest Campaign. The goal of this project was to construct a block of rehabilitation aviaries consisting of 10 enclosures at the Wak Gatak Songbird Rescue and Rehabilitation Center in West Kalimantan, Indonesia. These aviary enclosures will be used to rehabilitate incoming confiscated songbirds once they have gone through health check-ups and the quarantine process.

The total fund received from the EAZA Silent Forest Campaign for this project was EUR 15,523. This fund was used to construct one of three blocks of aviaries at the Wak Gatak Songbird Rescue and Rehabilitation Center. Each aviary block consists of a total of ten (10) 3.5m by 2.5m enclosures consisting of a mixed substrate floor and a half-open roof. The enclosures were designed with provisions to connect a maximum of five (5) enclosures on each side of the aviary block through a sliding hatch to increase the size of each aviary enclosure (Appendix - Fig. 10 and Fig. 11).

The following sections provide the progress update of construction activities carried out over the project period at the Wak Gatak Songbird Rescue and Rehab Center. Section 2.1 provides an update of the development of the aviary blocks followed by sections 2.2 and sections 2.3 highlighting other construction activities (not part of this project) completed during the project period.

2. Progress of development of the Wak Gatak Songbird Rescue and Rehabilitation Center

2.1. Construction of rehabilitation aviaries

Construction works for the aviaries began in August 2021 after multiple delays caused by bad weather, flooding, delay in acquiring building permits, and COVID-19 movement and working restrictions. Land clearing and foundation building for the aviaries were carried out between August-September 2021 and was followed by the construction of the aviary buildings and the enclosures between October-November 2021. At present, the construction of all three blocks (30 aviary enclosures) have been completed (Fig. 1). For step-by-step progress of the construction process of the aviary blocks please see pictures in the Appendix.







Figure 1: The completed three blocks of aviaries at the Wak Gatak Rescue and Rehabilitation Center

We will customize each aviary block with plant species and locomotive enrichments that will provide the opportunity to accommodate a diverse range of bird species at the Center. In order to do this, we will dedicate one aviary block (10 enclosures) to exclusively rehabilitate songbirds by planting plant species such as *Ficus benjamina* and *Asplenium nidus* that are known to provide great natural cover and opportunities for practising natural behaviour for songbirds. Another aviary block will be planted with plants (e.g. *Schefflera arboricola*) that are hardy enough to take the pressure of Psittacidae spp. and the remaining aviary block will be planted with plant species. In order to ensure minimal post-planting maintenance for the aviary plants, we are currently doing soil enrichments using organic methods for all of the 30 aviary enclosures.

2.2. Development of other facilities of the Wak Gatak Rescue and Rehabilitation Center

Construction of two other key buildings and their facilities that were completed during this project's period include the clinic building (Fig. 2) and the quarantine building (Fig. 3).

The clinic building is the first stop for all the incoming confiscated birds at the center. It is a two-storied building that includes the clinic area on the ground floor and an open meeting area on the second floor. The ground floor includes the vet office, washrooms, sterile kitchen, the lab, the examination room, and the recovery room.







Figure 2: The Clinic Building at Wak Gatak Songbird Rescue and Rehabilitation Center

Located behind the clinic building is the quarantine building, which includes two separate 5m by 12m rooms with their individual entrances and boot disinfectant sinks, a storage room, a detached toilet, and separate sewerage systems for human waste and quarantine waste. Inside the quarantine building, there are a total of 80 cages to house birds during their quarantine phase.



Figure 3: (left) The quarantine building, and (right) quarantine holding cages inside one of the quarantine rooms.

Together these three buildings provide us with the basic infrastructure to start receiving rescued bird species at the Wak Gatak Center. Upcoming developments for the Center includes the construction of the boundary wall and security check-posts for the Aviary and Quarantine Sections.





2.3. Procurement of Medical Equipment

We are in the process of procuring the basic clinic medical equipment and supplies such as stethoscopes, spring scales, nebulizer, minor & major surgery sets, tweezers & scissors, oxygen cylinder and regulator kits, and basic medical supplies. Due to limitations in funding and the availability of specialized local vendors, procurement of clinic equipment will be carried out in stages.

2.4. Staff hiring and training

Within the project period, we have hired a trained veterinarian who has multiple years of experience working with government agencies and wildlife release programs in East Java. After joining in August 2021, he received a week-long online training and evaluation of his knowledge on songbird rehabilitation, clinic hygiene, songbird diagnosis, and treatment with an external consultant. This was followed up with a month-long internship at Cikananga Conservation Breeding Center (CCBC) in West Java, Indonesia. Topics covered during the internship at CCBC include incoming bird management, clinic management, quarantine health management, husbandry & health management during rehabilitation, identification of common & important bird diseases, bird's clinical pathology, determining bird habits, conducting health assessments, developing translocation procedures, and creating a deceased bird's death report.

Presently, we are in the process of hiring the head keeper for the Center. The head keeper will work with the Veterinarian with regards to the management of the health and husbandry of all the birds housed at the rescue centre, carry out cleaning duties in and around aviaries and rescue centre grounds, prepare species-specific feed based on natural feeding behaviour for birds housed in the rescue center among other duties.

3. Expenses

The following table provides details of expenses incurred for the construction of one block of aviary using EAZA Silent Forest Campaign funds.

Item	IDR/Unit	Unit	# of Units	Cost IDR	Cost EUR			
Wall Construction								
Wire Cord for Wall Construction	155.000	260	m2	40.300.000	2.415,59			
Galvanized Pipe Steel	268.000	361	m	96.748.000	5.799,10			

Table 1: Cost breakdown for the construction of one aviary block.





Finishing	350.000	38	m2	13.300.000	797,21				
Roof Construction									
Roof Truss	200.000	354	m	70.800.000	4.243,77				
Roof of aviary	150.000	80	m2	12.000.000	719,28				
Aviary doors and Exit/Entrance									
Aviary enclosure doors	1.500.000	10	doors	15.000.000	899,10				
Exit and Entrance door	2.400.000	2	doors	4.800.000	287,71				
Sanitation System (including sterilization tub and clean water)	6.500.000	1	system	6.500.000	389,61				
Total				259.448.000	15.551				





Appendix



Figure 4: Land clearing for aviary blocks (August 2021)







Figure 5: Earthwork and foundation building for aviary blocks (August 2021)







Figure 6: Foundation and sidewall development of aviary blocks (September 2021)







Figure 7: Construction of aviary enclosures (September 2021)







Figure 8: Front view of the completed aviary blocks from the clinic building







Figure 9: The view inside of an aviary block.







Figure 10: An enclosure inside one of the aviary blocks.







Figure 11: Top view of one (1) aviary block with 10 enclosures.