

VALUES OF CONSERVATION AREA IN TINBARAP OIL PALM PLANTATION, MIRI, SARAWAK

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INTRODUCTION

Oil palm plantations maintain healthy biodiversity is one of the guidelines of the Principles and Criteria highlighted by Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) to monitors impacts and make efforts to protect, restoring and maintaining the ecosystem function and services. Sarawak Oil Palm Berhad had set aside some of the areas within and around the oil palm landscape to provide natural habitat to support a viable population. Bird and mammal sampling were carried out at the Tinbarap plantation of Sarawak Oil Palm Berhad (SOPB) which is located at Miri, Sarawak in January, May and November 2016. The objectives of this assessment are to determine birds and mammals species present in the Tinbarap conservation area and identify the conservation status of birds and mammals species (rare, threatened or endangered).

STUDY SITES AND METHODS

The birds and mammals survey was conducted at Tinbarap Conservation Area (TCA), Tinbarap Oil Palm Plantation (TOPP) and unplanted area (UPA). This plantation was planted at peatland and the conservation area was located at three peat swamp community characteristics (mixed peat swamp forest, Alan bunga forest, and Padang alan forest). In terms of bird surveys, there were two methods; mist netting and point count observation survey. Observed and captured species of bird was identified based on Myers (2009) and Phillipps and Phillipps (2014). In terms of mammal surveys, four methods were used: mist nets, observation, camera trapping and interview surveys. The identification of captured and observed mammals was made following reference of Payne et al. (1998).

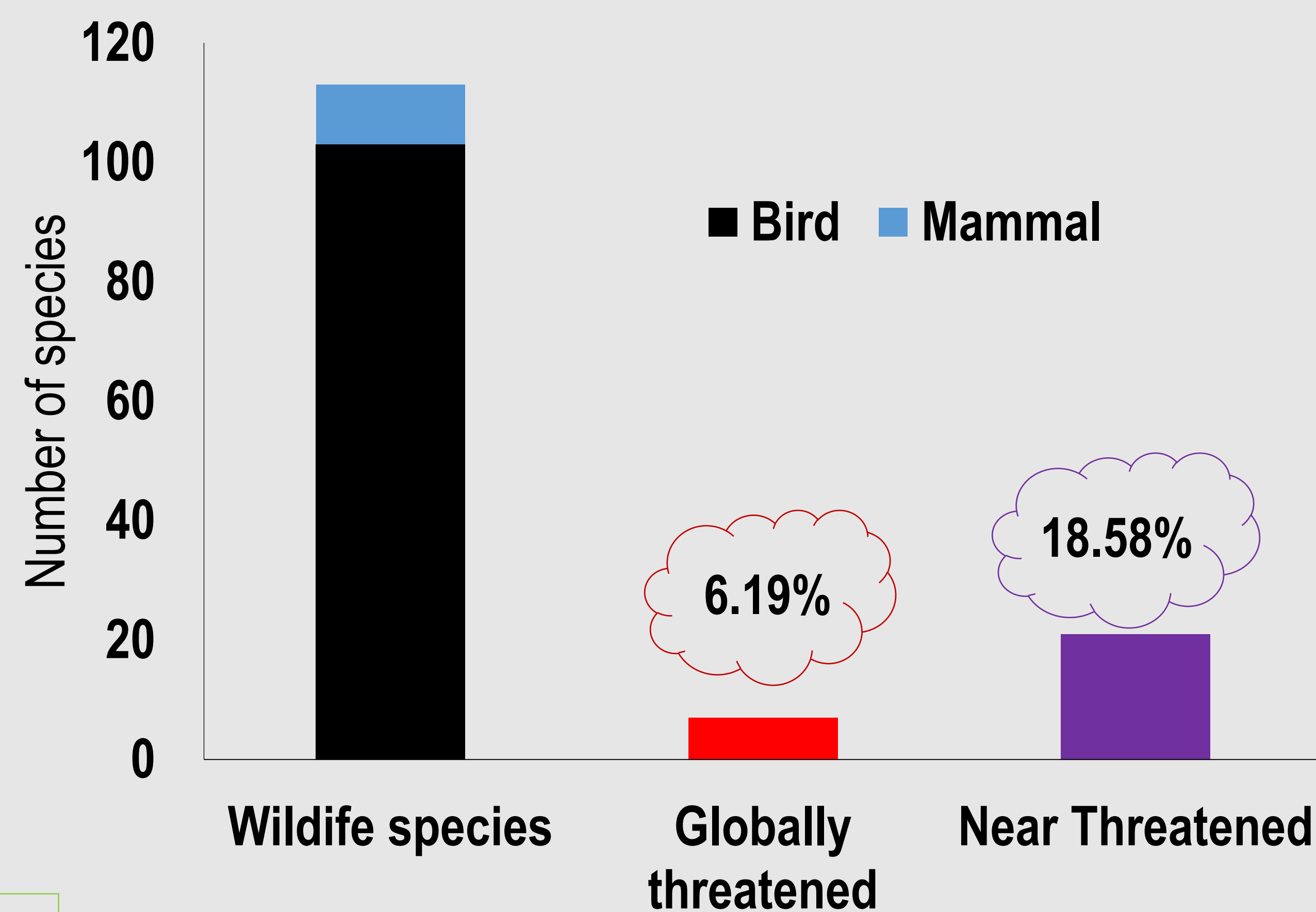
RESULTS

BIRDS

- ✓ 103 species of bird belonging to 41 families
- ✓ Two globally threatened species and 20 near threatened species under the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species, 2016 (Figure 1)
- ✓ The family Timaliidae (Babblers) is the most diverse birds in the conservation area with nine species, followed by Nectariniidae (Sunbirds) with eight species and Cuculidae (Cuckoos) with seven species.
- ✓ The dominant bird was Long-tailed Parakeet, *Psittacula longicauda* which normally feed on fruits, young leaves and opportunistically insects (Phillipps and Phillipps, 2014).

MAMMALS

- ✓ Ten species of mammals from five orders and nine families
- ✓ Five globally threatened species and one near threatened species listed under the IUCN Redlist 2016 were recorded (Figure 1)
- ✓ The most dominant mammal is Pig-tailed Macaque, *Macaca nemestrina*
- ✓ Other mammals recorded in the conservation area are Whitehead's Rat, Leopard cat and Plantain squirrel was observed within the conservation area.
- ✓ The presence of Malayan Sun Bear and Sambar Deer in the conservation area was recorded from an interview with plantation workers.



Benefits Maintaining Forest Patches In Oil Palm Plantation

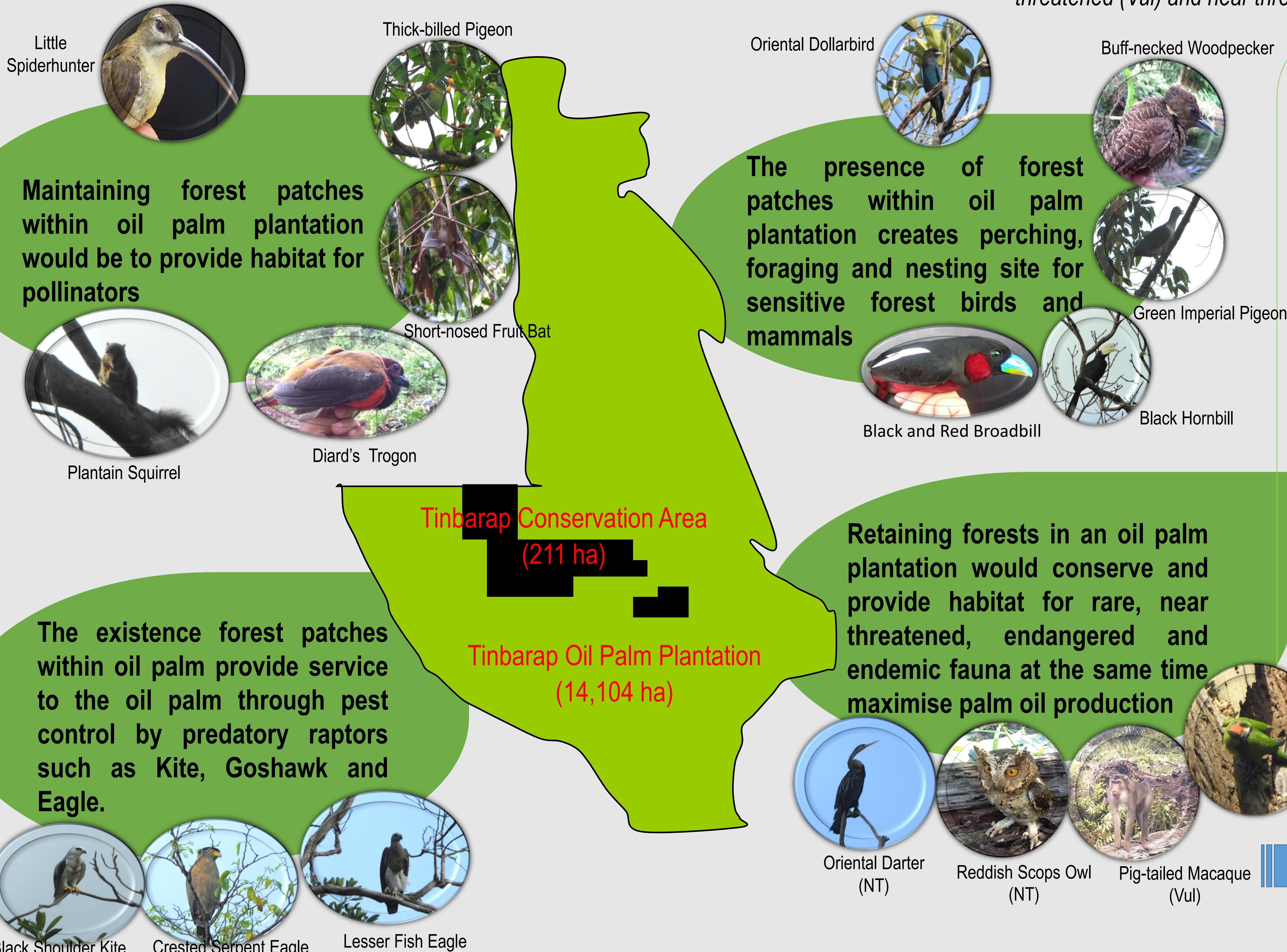


Figure 1. Total species number of bird and mammal and number of globally threatened (Vul) and near threatened (NT) species listed under IUCN, 2016

CONCLUSION

The presence of forest patches in oil palm plantation occurs when developers make a serious decision to reserve certain size of their areas of forest as part of their commitment to sustainability. This assessment represents the first step in biodiversity management in an oil palm landscape. The effectiveness of such endeavour will depend on strong will and perseverance to prevent further degradation, as well as a trade-off between conservation benefits and economic pressure.