



## Case Study

# Payment for Ecosystem Services in practice:

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An example of protecting forests and improving lives of forest communities delivered through private sector investment

October 2022



## Summary

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This case study describes how projects supported by Partnerships for Forests (P4F) have improved forest community livelihoods and forest conservation and restoration by establishing a new Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) market in Indonesia.

The projects addressed both demand- and supply-side issues by creating an entire value chain of suppliers, interlocutors, and buyers.

On the demand side, global commodities companies previously lacked access to the sustainable forestry projects needed to improve their footprint and/or offset any liabilities they have as Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) members. P4F helped to address this by supporting market access player Lestari Capital to develop the Rimba Collective and the Sustainable Commodities Conservation Mechanism (SCCM) RSPO Solutions mechanisms, which allow the companies to buy certified conservation outcomes from village forests and ERCs. To date, four companies have invested in the Rimba Collective, committing

approximately £52m, and three companies have invested with SCCM RSPO Solutions, committing more than £17m and protecting a combined area of over 41k ha of forests.

On the supply side, many village communities lacked the capacity and access to finance needed to effectively manage their forests and provide ecosystem restoration concessions (ERCs). P4F supported eight forest communities to develop business plans for selling their conservation outcomes via Rimba Collective and SCCM RSPO Solutions. Two of the supply-side villages in West Kalimantan, Nanga Lauk and Tanjung, have now secured PES over 25 years to carry out forest conservation and restoration activities and to develop new sustainable income streams for their communities.



# Context

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About 50% of Indonesia's land area is covered by primary forest<sup>1</sup> and around 55 million people, scattered around the archipelago of islands, depend directly on the forests for their livelihoods.<sup>2</sup> However, commodity-type markets, especially palm oil, threaten these important ecosystems, with only 25% of companies with deforestation risk in their supply chains mentioning deforestation in their emission reduction strategies (Forest Trends). The National Development Planning Agency's *Indonesian Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2015–2020* estimates that it would cost over £500 million annually to finance the protection of forests in conservation areas, which are classified by the Indonesian Government. There remains a significant funding gap as the Indonesian Government covers only about 25% of this sum, and it doesn't apply to all forest areas in the country.<sup>3</sup> There is a big opportunity for business models that have forest conservation and restoration at their core, that would support a move away from destructive business models and close the financing gap for conservation projects. One such option is the development of a Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) market. These services include water and air purification, carbon stocks, food supply, ecotourism, forest conservation and biodiversity protection.

PES schemes have been operating in Indonesia since the early 2000s. The main principle of PES schemes is that those who provide ecosystem services are compensated for their efforts, and those who benefit from those services pay for their provision.<sup>4</sup>

The main advantage of PES for environmental protection is that they provide the opportunity to raise capital for conservation and restoration

projects on an ongoing basis, which allows these projects to become economically viable in the long-term. In a PES and forests context, the ecosystem service provided is conserved or restored forests, improved sustainable livelihoods for forest communities, preserved biodiversity, and reduced carbon emissions. This case study reports such PES forest conservation schemes.

In 2016, the Indonesian Minister of Environment and Forestry (MoEF) issued a new regulation on social forestry. The regulation supports the rights of communities to manage forests under social forestry programmes including village forests (*Hutan Desas* in Bahasa). It includes details of the procedures and rights of communities within and surrounding State Forest Areas to obtain management rights over forest areas in their village and/or jurisdiction. In 2004, the MoEF also pioneered a model called Ecosystem Restoration Concessions (ERCs). Prior to this, production forests in Indonesia had been given to private companies mainly for logging and commodity plantations. With the new ERC permits, however, forests used for timber and non-timber products can be allocated for conservation and restoration activities.<sup>5</sup> Regulations stipulate that organisations that hold an ERC license should promote restoration activities to "re-establish a biological balance" in the concession area. They also allow income generating activities, including selling credits for ecosystem services, ecotourism, and the production and sale of non-timber forest products (NTFPs). The Indonesian Government is currently working on a Carbon Pricing Regulation and once this is passed into law, PES may also include carbon credits. The ERC model thus pioneered a private restoration model and paved the way for new forest management in Indonesia.

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1. **Global Forest Watch**, n.d.

2. **World Resources Institute**, n.d.

3. **Oleh & Manurung**, *Skema pembiayaan konservasi dan pelestarian hutan melalui model transfer fiskal berbasis ekologis di Indonesia*, 2019

4. **Suich et al.**, *Payments for ecosystem services in Indonesia*, 2016

5. **World Rainforest Management**, *Indonesia: What is an Ecosystem Restoration Concession?*, 2020



# The challenge

There are resource and capacity challenges on both the supply side and demand side of PES and forest conservation schemes.

On the supply side, around 4 million hectares (ha) in Indonesia have been allocated to social forestry licenses and around 575k ha have been allocated for ERCs (15 licenses). However, many communities and organisations that hold these licenses do not yet have the resources or technical capacity to protect and manage the area sustainably as the concept is still relatively new and best practices are still being developed. An internal review of the maturity of social forestry and ERC projects conducted by Partnerships for Forests (P4F) found that less than 10% of these are ready to trade their forest conservation outcomes and enter the PES market. The projects are also often small and face difficulty in securing capital for feasibility studies, finding potential buyers, conducting free prior and informed consent (FPIC) with communities, and designing the business model.

On the demand side, the move by multinational companies to adopt net zero and deforestation-

free targets and other sustainability certificates in response to global pressure to manage their operations more sustainably, has led to increased demand to engage in transparent and straightforward conservation initiatives. One example is the palm oil producer companies that aim to be certified by the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO). In order to comply with requirements, these companies need to undergo and disclose a Land Use Change Analysis and High Conservation Value Assessment where they review whether they have degraded or deforested areas in their concessions, especially those with high conservation value. This process may find that the companies are required to conduct remediation and/or compensation activities for past deforestation. Compensation activities include the financing or implementation of a long-term conservation or restoration project outside of their concession. Historically, however, RSPO-certified companies have not had the information or conservation expertise to identify suitable projects to invest in or have not had the capacity to carry out feasibility studies on their own.





# The solution

P4F projects have helped address challenges on both supply and demand sides, as well as barriers

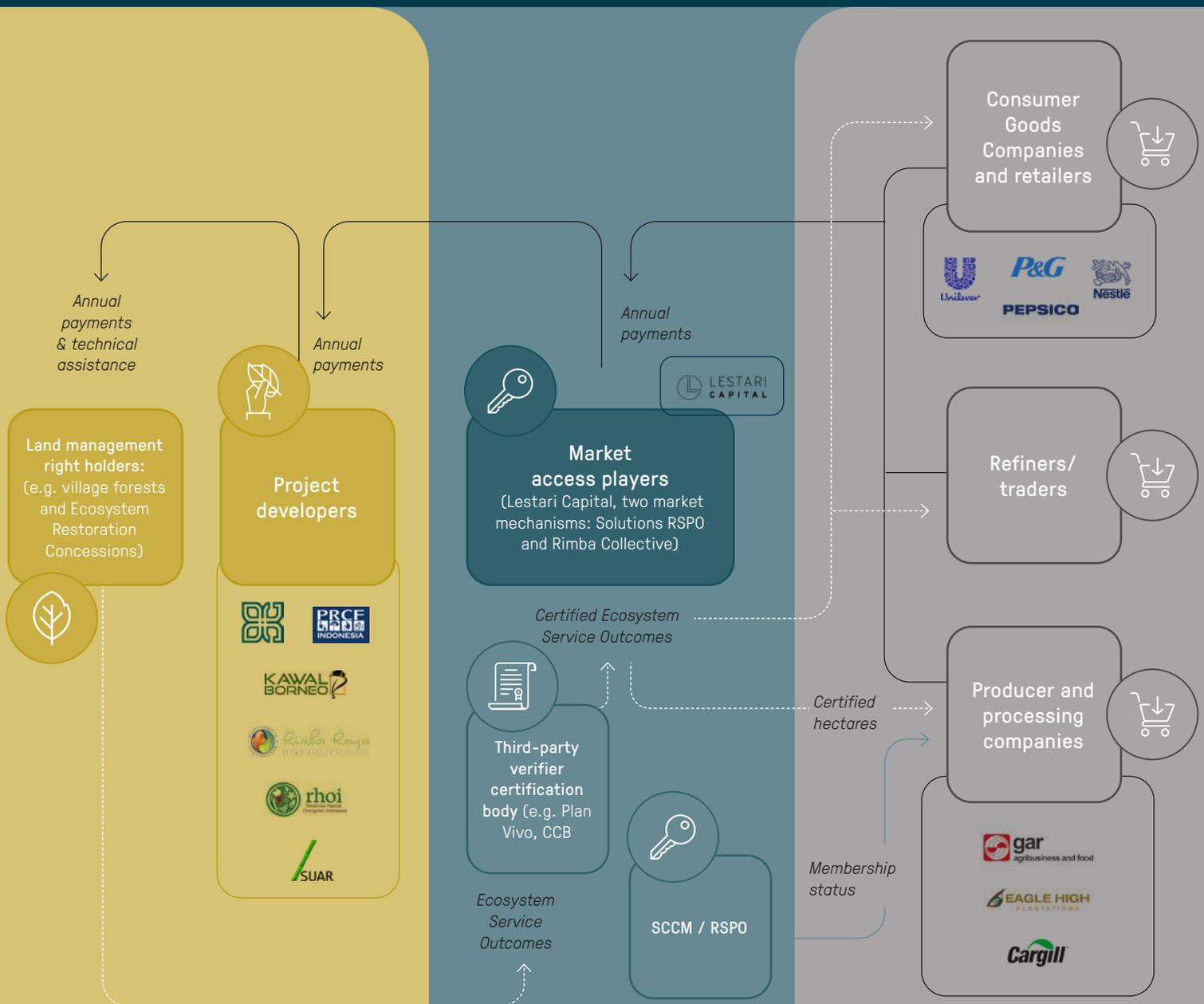
to connecting the two, at various points along the value chain.

FIGURE 1 | PES ecosystem

## Supply

## Market mechanism

## Demand





## Getting the supply side ready

On the supply side, there are community-managed village forests and company-managed ERCs that could be a source of PES projects. They are specific, government-supported schemes where a community or company has been granted land management rights by regional authorities. These come with both rights on how forests can be used and obligations on how much area must be conserved and restored.

The Tanjung village community project, for example, has the right to:

- Utilise the area for NTFPs cultivation, wildlife captive breeding and cultivation of livestock fodder business activities;
- Utilise ecosystem services, including water and water services, tourism, biodiversity and environmental protection, and carbon storage and/or sequestration; and
- Extract NTFPs such as rattan, honey, sap, latex, resin, fruits, mushrooms and swiftlet nests.

They are also obligated to:

- Comply with laws and regulations on forestry;
- Implement village forest area boundary demarcation;

- Develop and implement village forest management plans for the duration of the management rights;
- Implement protection of the village forest;
- Implement rehabilitation in the village forest;
- Implement enrichment planting in the village forest;
- Implement forest product administration.

Since 2017, P4F has supported eight such projects to start selling their conservation outcomes. Three of these have signed agreements with buyers and started to implement activities, including the Nanga Lauk and Tanjung village forests in West Kalimantan. Both received P4F support via the People Resources and Conservation Foundation (PRCF) Indonesia to create design documents and conduct feasibility studies for providing forest conservation services. As often happens for social project partners where there is low community capacity or legal complexity, a project development partner acted as interlocutor between the village forest community and P4F and the market-access player, Lestari Capital. The process was community-driven, following a detailed FPIC process. The documents and studies created have allowed these two village forests to enter the market and start selling conservation outcomes to companies looking to offset and pay their liabilities and fulfil their sustainability commitments.

## About PRCF

Founded in 1995, the PRCF is a non-governmental, non-membership, non-profit organization incorporated in the United States. Its goals are “to strengthen local participation in the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem functions, through measures that address the protection and wise use of natural resources, and the socio-economic development and cultural revitalization of affected communities.”. The PRCF has grown since its inception, and now operates in several countries in South East Asia as a semi-autonomous federation of Country Programmes, such as PRCF Indonesia. PRCF Indonesia was registered as a legal entity in Indonesia on October 20, 2000. Their activities include research, capacity building, community-based conservation management and advocacy.





## Linking supply and demand

P4F supported Lestari Capital to develop two market mechanisms to link private sector companies with village forests and ERCs.

Firstly, they developed a mechanism for channelling private sector financing to conservation projects, including setting up the governance structure and compensation process, engaging potential buyers to ensure the mechanism is accepted by the RSPO, and identifying supply-side projects. Known as the Sustainable Commodities Conservation

Mechanism (SCCM) RSPO Solutions and launched in 2018, it allows palm oil producing companies to compensate for past deforestation activities by investing in forest conservation projects that also benefit local communities in Indonesia. The SCCM model allows companies, including early investors Cargill and Eagle High Plantations, to offset their previous liabilities, deliver on their sustainable palm oil policies and realise their commitments as members of the RSPO. Companies investing with the SCCM receive third-party certified hectares of forest that have been conserved and/or restored thanks to their financial contributions.

**“The P4F funding has been important for the mechanisms to survive in the set-up phase. In the beginning, it was difficult for companies like Cargill and Eagle High to decide whether a supply project was good or not. So, Lestari Capital had to visit the supply projects, build trust with the project development partners and village forests, conduct due diligence, and develop legal and financial structures to secure the fund as well as to incentivize the projects on the ground. Thanks to the funding from P4F, Lestari Capital was able to take this risk, get the supply projects ready and at the same time show the companies that the projects are worth investing in. In a sense, the short-term funding from P4F has thus helped us to secure the long-term funding, and that is very helpful for the people on the ground. For example, it’s just amazing to see how much the community of Nanga Lauk has improved with the support from Cargill.”**

Tito Adikusumo, Manager of Solutions and Strategic Engagement, Lestari Capital



**“It takes a significant amount of environmental and conservation expertise to meet the RSPO’s Remedial and Compensation Procedure guidelines that our company does not have. We work with Lestari Capital because they help us meet RSPO requirements, ensuring our financial commitments to biodiversity and conservation translate to long-lasting impact.”**

Denys Munang, Director of Sustainability  
at Eagle High Plantation

The Rimba Collective is the second mechanism developed by Lestari Capital and was launched in 2021. Like the SCCM, it supports major buyers and processors of palm oil to invest in long-term South East Asian projects to improve livelihoods and biodiversity, and reduce carbon emissions. However, commitments under Rimba Collective are not linked to RSPO requirements and are entirely voluntary. Its members, including Nestlé, PepsiCo, Procter and Gamble and Unilever, pay into the Rimba Collective’s fund based on the volume of palm oil they procure, and so jointly invest in a portfolio of village forests and ERCs. They can then claim these ecosystem services outcomes in proportion to the amount they have paid into the fund in accordance with the existing regulatory framework.

In both SCCM and the Rimba Collective, buyers commit to supporting projects for a minimum of 25 years. Companies under SCCM sign 25-year contracts with Lestari Capital while members of the Rimba Collective sign five-year contracts at a time with a non-contractual commitment to 25 years, to allow for fluctuations in their palm oil usage.

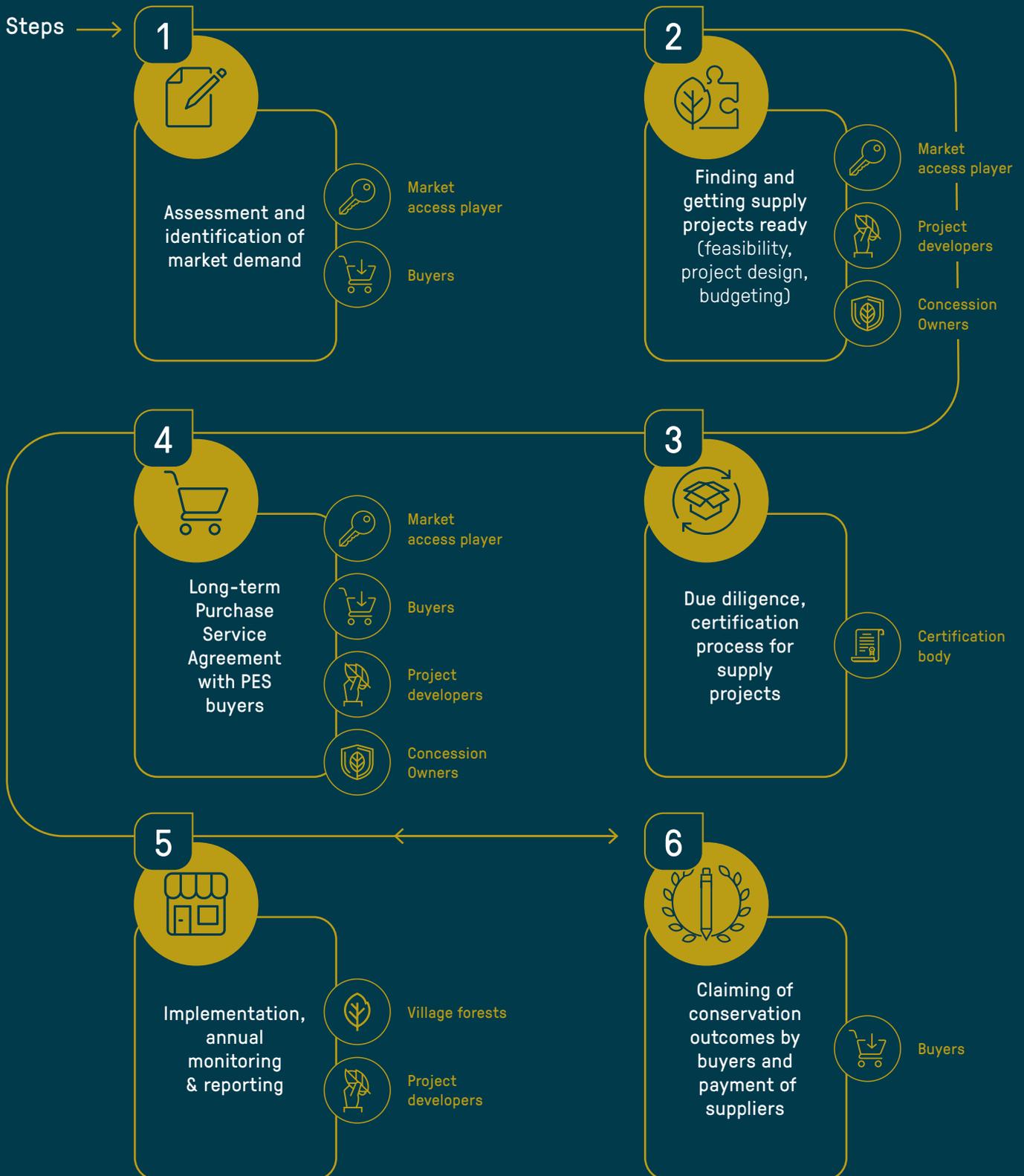
The two mechanisms help connect the supply and demand sides by: identifying and conducting due diligence of supply projects; identifying potential buyers and supporting them to find a credible supply of conservation projects; signing purchasing agreements between the market access player (Lestari Capital), the supply-side actors and the demand-side actors; and holding the buyers accountable to their commitments.

### **The PES value chain in action**

Getting the supply side ready, securing interest from the demand side and connecting the two has provided the foundation for a forest-focused PES market in Indonesia. Small social forestry projects and ERCs can now enter the market and receive longer-term funding for their conservation activities. Companies in the palm oil sector, on the other hand, can pay off past liabilities and meet their sustainability commitments.



FIGURE 2 | Steps in the PES value chain





As a first step, Lestari Capital assesses demand and identifies and signs a letter of intent with potential buyers for PES and identifies village forests and concession owners that are interested in becoming suppliers and joining the value chain.

After signing an initial agreement with village forests and/or concession owners, preparation work starts. This can include feasibility studies, FPIC processes, social and environmental baseline assessments, and development of a workplan and budget. Project developers, usually NGOs such as PRCF Indonesia, KBCF and Suar, are sometimes needed to act as intermediaries between Lestari Capital and the village forest if the village community has insufficient capacity or the legal set-up to act as the contracting partner themselves. In such a case, project developers sign the agreement with Lestari Capital and buyers, and become responsible for receiving/dispersing the funds and reporting back on the outcomes.

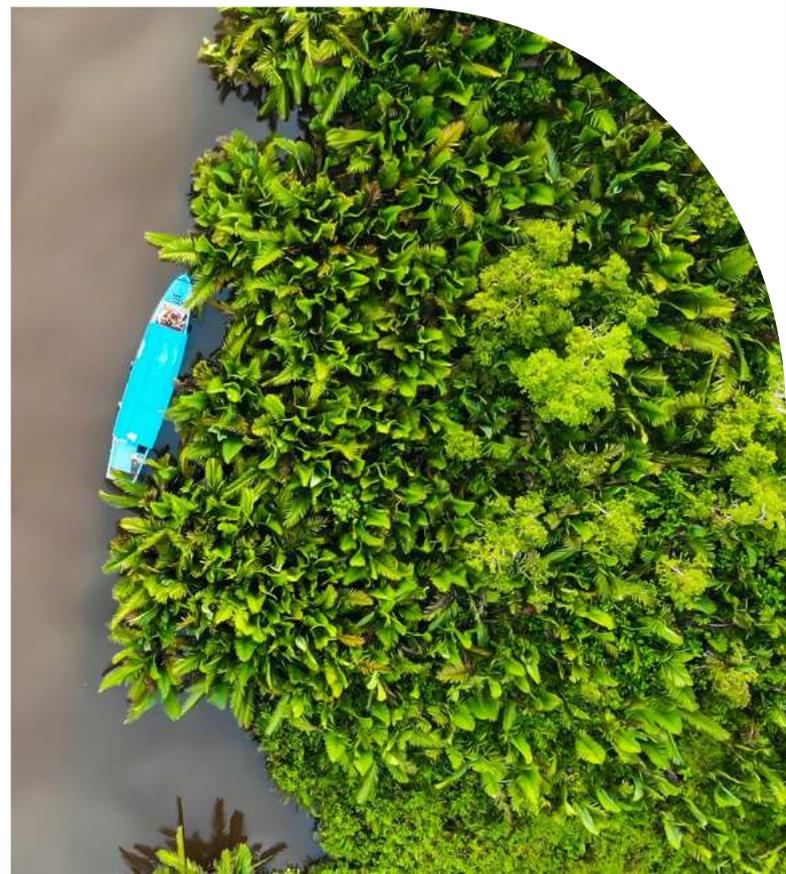
For SCCM projects, the RSPO assesses past liabilities and approves that the investment with SCCM will make up for them, so that the companies can maintain their RSPO member status. In this process, palm oil producers need to disclose hectares with high conservation value in their concessions that have been deforested

or degraded due to their activities. In order to maintain RSPO member status, the companies need to provide evidence that the projects they support will restore as many hectares as they have destroyed.

Once both the supply and demand side actors have been identified and engaged, Lestari Capital carries out due diligence and gets third-party certification for the baseline studies and workplans. If the supply projects pass both due diligence and certification, a Purchase Service Agreement is signed between Lestari Capital, the buyer and the NGO or ERC, after which project activities can start.

In the final step, project outcomes are reported to Lestari Capital, who seek third-party verification for them and, if accepted, forwards the conservation outcomes to the buyers. Companies can then use the outcomes for reporting their sustainability efforts.

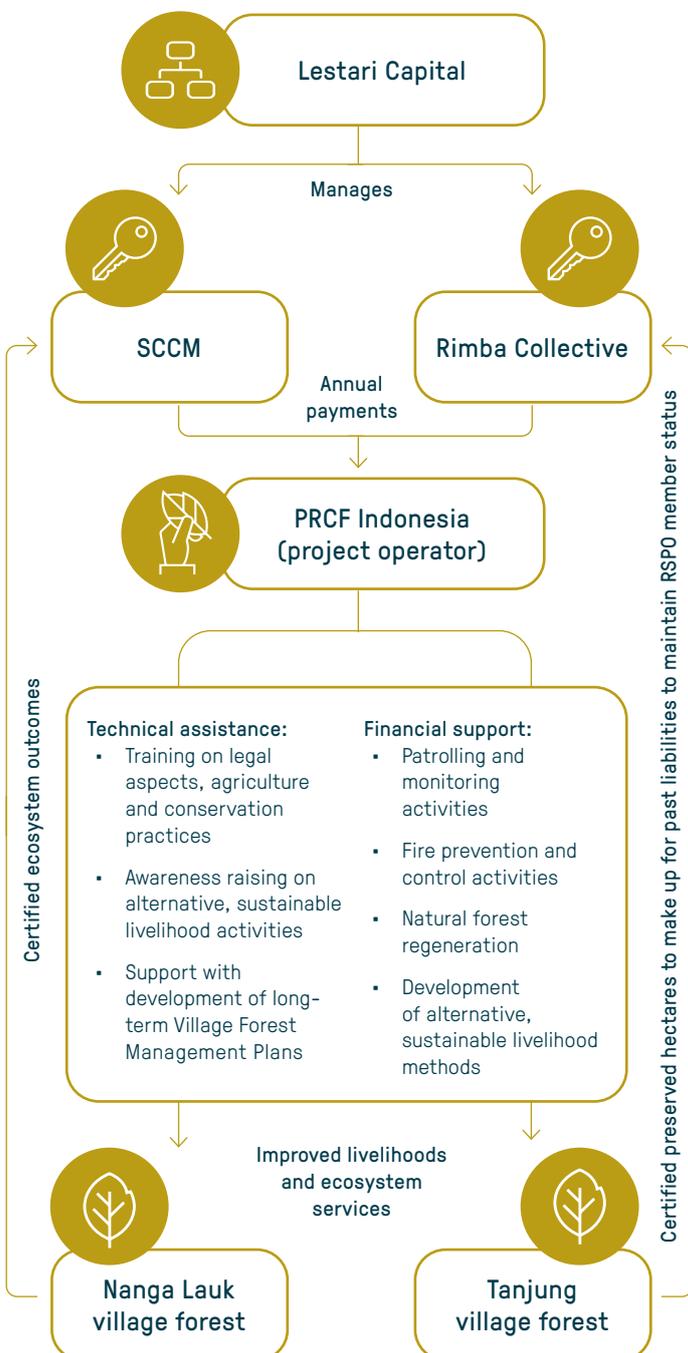
To date, four companies have invested in the Rimba Collective, committing approximately £52m, and three companies have invested with SCCM, committing more than £17m, and the two mechanisms are protecting a combined area of over 41k ha of forests.





# What does this mean for the forests and people of Nanga Lauk and Tanjung?

**FIGURE 3** PES for Nanga Lauk and Tanjung village forests



Nanga Lauk and Tanjung are among the village forest projects that have received payments for their conservation efforts having entered the newly developed PES market. Figure 3 shows how these villages are connected to other actors in the value chain to unlock investments.

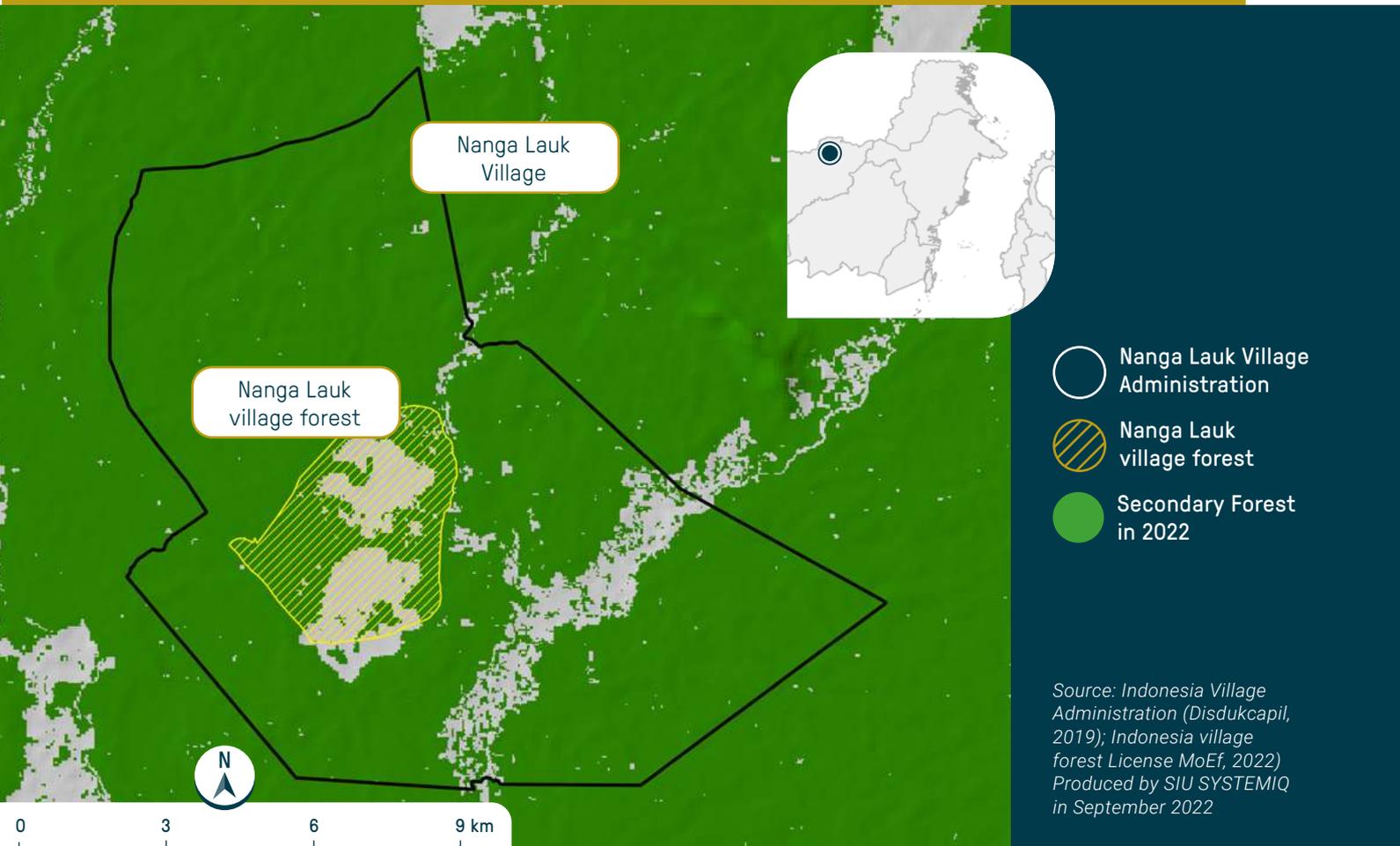
**“For us, the obvious benefit is long-term financing. Historically, we only had projects of short duration– one or two years – depending on the grant and donor. With funding from SCCM, we have guaranteed long-term financing of up to 25 years. This provides certainty as well as flexibility to the community while they are preparing themselves to manage the forest independently.”**

Imanul Huda, Director, People Resources and Conservation Foundation (PRCF) Indonesia.



## The Nanga Lauk village forest project

FIGURE 4 | Nanga Lauk village forest



Nanga Lauk is located in Kapuas Hulu District, West Kalimantan, deep in the heart of Borneo. Their administrative area includes 10k ha of peatland and riparian forest, which support a diversity of flora and fauna. Four tree species within the area are listed as vulnerable by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and 114 wildlife species are listed in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. The forest is also vital to over 700 Nanga Lauk village members who depend on it for food, building materials and income. The main livelihood activities in Nanga Lauk include fishing, honey production and rubber cultivation.

As in other parts of Borneo, forests in Nanga Lauk were threatened by logging, mining, the expansion

of palm oil plantations and unsustainable practices by local community members. In 2017, the community obtained the management rights for 1.5k ha of village forest for 35 years. After two years of preparation, including project design, due diligence and feasibility studies, PRCF Indonesia, on behalf of the Nanga Lauk village, signed a Purchase Service Agreement with Lestari Capital and Cargill under the SCCM mechanism in 2019. The Agreement guarantees an income for ecosystem services that the project will deliver over 25 years. Nanga Lauk has received payments from Cargill via SCCM and PRCF since 2019, as well as training on village forest management and various sustainable agroforestry practices by PRCF. In addition to covering the cost of direct conservation activities such as village forest



management, forest patrols and tree planting, funding has also allowed the community to set up five new sustainable business streams from honey, rattan, rubber, ecotourism, and fish processing. In this way, the PES market has provided a long-term income source for the Nanga Lauk community in exchange for their sustainable management of their village forest.

Nanga Lauk has become one of the most rapidly developing villages in the district, with its development index<sup>6</sup> upgraded for three consecutive years. Nanga Lauk elected the first female Village Forest Head, Hariska, in 2022 and won the Wana Lestari award from the MoEF for its commitment to conservation and restoration.

**“The people of Nanga Lauk feel very helped by the sustainable program, which will hopefully continue for several generations. The community’s economy has improved and jobs are created. At least 40% of the population is involved in the program.”**

Agus Yanto, Head of Village

**“Activities carried out have increased our human resources through conservation and patrol activities, rehabilitation of critical land, and utilization of non-timber forest products.”**

Hamdi, Head of Village Forests

**“Since the forest received the protected status, deforestation has been reduced. The income is also quite good for my family.”**

Nina Susanti, fisher woman



6. The national development index for villages in Indonesia, IDM, takes into account the village's social security (e.g., healthcare, education), economic resilience and environmental conditions. The index classifies villages into five development stages: least developed, underdeveloped, developing, advancing and independent.



**1,430-ha** of Nanga Lauk village forest with threatened peatland and riparian forest located in the heart of Kalimantan **protected**



**Rich biodiversity** including 123 plants and 155 wildlife species, of which many are endangered, **conserved**



At least **1,500 tons** of Co2e annual emissions from tree loss **prevented**, not including the much larger prevented emission from peatland degradation



## Expected benefits from Nanga Lauk village forest



Livelihood for **700+ people** residing in the village that depend on the forest **secured and improved** for the next 25+ years

Strengthening livelihood: planting of timber, NTFPs, and nectar-producing (for forest honey) trees

Improving livelihood: promotion and marketing of new green businesses such as rattan, bamboo, and ecotourism



**25 year** of payments for conservation outcomes **mobilized** by Lestari Capital, effectively enabling the protection and conservation of Nanga Lauk by the private sector

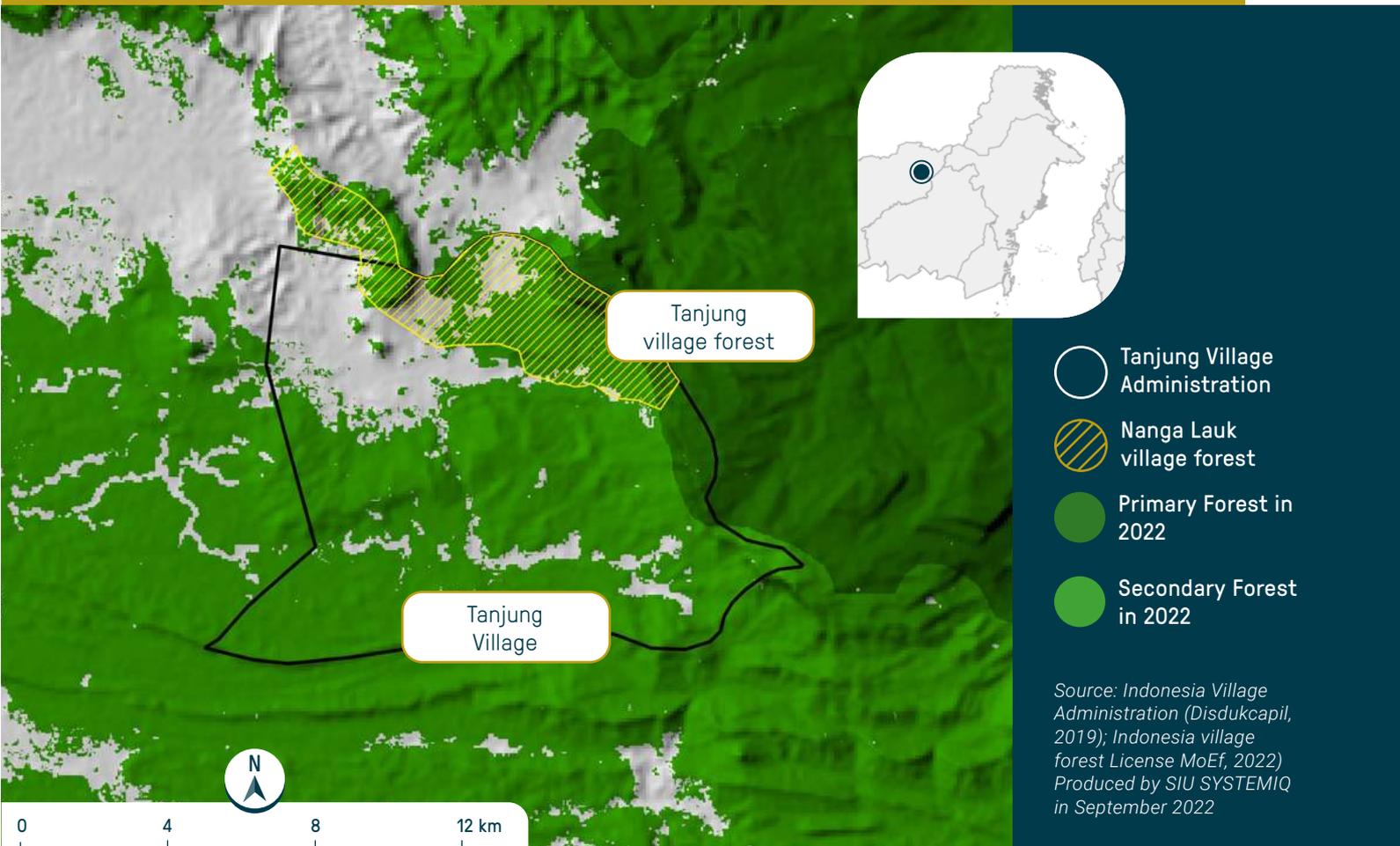


Payments will secure the forest conservation and community's livelihood in the long-term, being the pioneering village forest in Indonesia to have achieved this



## The Tanjung village forest project

FIGURE 6 | Tanjung village forest



Tanjung is located in Kapuas Hulu district, West Kalimantan. The village acts as a buffer zone between protected primary forests (to the East and South) and production forests (to the North and West). Habitat includes mixed dry lowland dipterocarp forest, riparian forest, hilly lowland forest and heath forest. In 2015, PRCF Indonesia conducted a High Conservation Value of Forests Assessment and recorded three species classified as having high conservation value (one bird, two mammals), five species included in CITES appendices (four birds, one mammal), 48 species in the IUCN Red List (42 birds,

four mammals, one amphibian and one fish), and nine species protected by Indonesian law (eight birds, one mammal).<sup>7</sup>

Commercial logging and mining operations are the main cause of deforestation in the area. In Tanjung village, timber extraction is typically used for house and bridge construction and for making boats and as fuel. Other primary causes of forest degradation include wildlife hunting, gold mining in the river, and extraction of timber and non-timber forest products by outsiders.

7. The Landscapes and Livelihoods Group (TLLG) on behalf of Yayasan Pelestari Ragamhayati dan Cipta Fondasi Indonesia (PRCF Indonesia), *Plan Vivo Project Idea Note: Village Forest Protection and Restoration in Kapuas Hulu District, West Kalimantan, Indonesia, 2021*



The main livelihood for Tanjung's 1,000+ community members is farming, with shifting cultivation techniques. Community members have been farming for generations and most maintain rubber trees (*Hevea brasiliensis*) which was the main income source before the price of rubber started falling in 2010. Currently, the main source of income is from cultivating a traditional medicinal plant, purik (*Mitragyna speciosa* also, widely known as 'kratom, kratum, kedamba'). Purik, however, is likely to become as a narcotic and thus illegal to farm.

In 2015, the Tanjung village community obtained Village Forest Management Rights for a State Forest Area of 2,5k ha with Protection Forest status for a period of 35 years. In 2022, after working with the village to develop a project plan and carry out due diligence and feasibility studies, PRCF Indonesia, on behalf of the village forest committee, signed a Purchase Service Agreement with Lestari Capital's Rimba Collective. It stipulates that the Tanjung village forest will

receive performance-based PES over the next 25 years through the Rimba Collective.

The agreement with the Rimba Collective allows Tanjung community to carry out forest conservation activities and develop alternative, sustainable income streams, and receive training by PRCF. Forest management plans will be designed to support activities that provide income to cover the costs of forest protection and restoration activities in the long term. The village has already created business working groups on livestock, plantation, agriculture and fisheries. The efforts are now focusing on spreading the benefits to the whole community, including those who have to shift their economic activities to become more sustainable. After demonstrating the potential to effectively manage their village forest and generate sustainable sources of income, it is expected that participating communities will be able to extend their village forest management rights beyond their initial 35-year period.

**“The improvement of our community’s economic condition cannot just rely on Village Fund and State Budget. We hope that with the funding from Rimba Collective, the development of the whole village will improve and further increase the village’s development index. The funding will be allocated to different sectors and new income streams such as plantation, farming, education, and others. We believe the Rimba Collective funding will enable an improved economic condition for Tanjung’s community.”**

Dingo Markus, Initiator for forest conservation in Tanjung Village



**2,520-ha** of Tanjung village forest located in the heart of Kalimantan **are sustainably managed**



**Biodiversity conserved.**

3 species classified as having high conservation value (1 bird, 2 mammals), 5 species included in CITES appendices (4 birds, 1 mammal), 48 species in the IUCN Red List (42 birds, 4 mammals, 1 amphibian, and 1 fish), and 9 species protected by Indonesian law (8 birds, 1 mammal).

**Environmental**

## Expected benefits from Tanjung village forest

**Social**

**Financial**

**900+**  
people

Livelihood for **900+ people** residing in the village that depend on the forest **secured and improved** for the next 25 years

Strengthening livelihood: planting of trees, NTFPs, and nectar-producing (for forest honey) trees

Improving livelihood: promotion and marketing of new green businesses such as fisheries, livestock

**25**  
years

**25 years** of payments for conservation outcomes **mobilized** from Rimba Collective, effectively enabling the protection and conservation of Tanjung by the private sector



# What may the future hold for further PES market development and Indonesia's forests?

The examples of the Nanga Lauk and Tanjung village forests show the potential of the emerging PES value chain to access finance for local forest conservation and livelihood projects. Both the supply and demand were already existent, and through relatively easy actions to improve the maturity of the supply projects and connecting supply and demand, significant amounts of funding could be unlocked to protect large forest areas and make a real difference for the livelihoods of forest-dependent communities.

Growth opportunities for PES market systems include expanding the offer to new types of potential buyers, strengthening the supply by developing new types of supply projects, and replication of the model across the region. Lestari Capital is in the process of expanding its client base and aims to bring palm oil processors and traders to join the Rimba Collective initiative as a way to demonstrate shared responsibility within the palm oil value chain. On the supply side, there is the potential to develop project models to help extracting businesses to shift to a more sustainable

business model through the PES. Geographical expansion would bring more forests into the market, however, this would also mean changing the approach as the regulatory environment and stakeholders will differ.

Continuous funding for feasibility studies and readiness projects is needed to explore new project models and geographies to enable this growth. As these types of investments can be too risky for buyers, they rely on (multi- and bi-lateral) donor and philanthropic funding.

The Government of Indonesia is currently working on a Carbon Pricing Regulation, which would allow PES vehicles to include carbon in the offer of ecosystem services. This will come both with advantages and drawbacks: for example, while the inclusion of carbon would significantly increase the financial return per hectare of forest, the methodology around carbon calculations is very complex and so might not be usable by smaller developers such as those supporting village forests.





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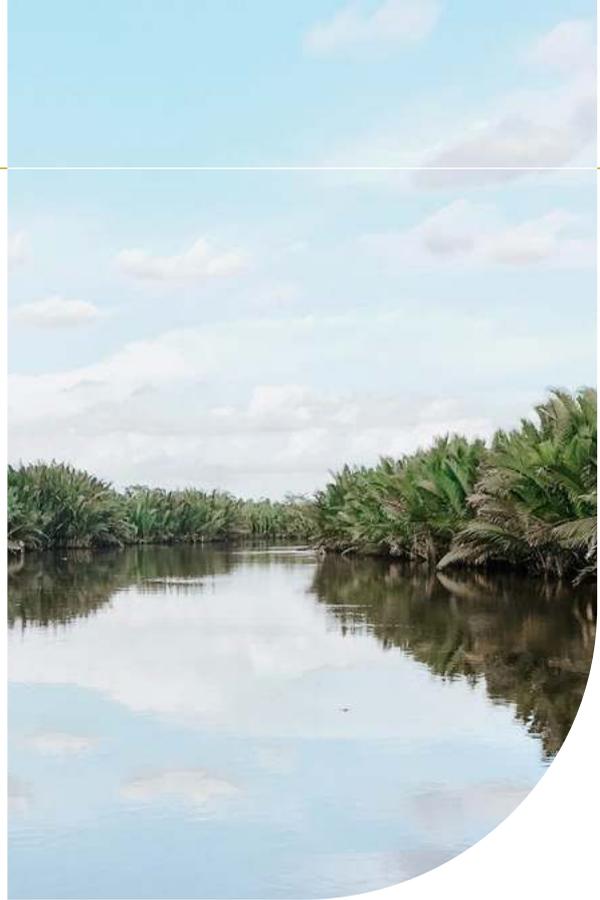
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