

FORMATAT

THE ALLIANCE OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF THE HIGHLANDS OF BORNEO



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**“We, the Indigenous Peoples of the Highlands in the Heart of Borneo who share a common heritage and a common land as the Lundayeh, Kelabit, Lun Bawang, and Sa’ban people, come together in the Alliance of the Indigenous Peoples of the Highlands of Borneo (FORMATAT) to: increase awareness and understanding about the highland communities, build local capacity, and encourage sustainable development in the Heart of Borneo”
(Formatat Declaration)**



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The Alliance of The Indigenous Peoples
of The Highlands of Borneo

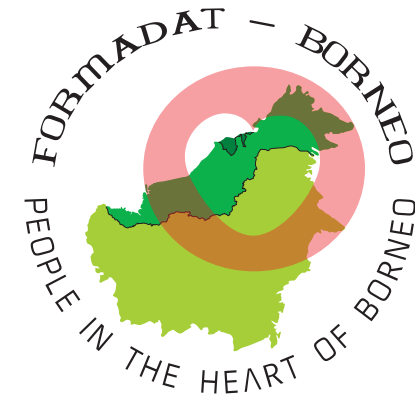
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Cover Photo:

Flute players of traditional Lundayeh music at the
inauguration of the Cultural Field School in Terang Baru,
Krayan. (Photo by Sandra Tagal)

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THE LAND & THE PEOPLES of the HIGHLANDS

The Highlands of Borneo are located in the far interior of the island, in the “heart” of Borneo, and are divided between the neighboring and sovereign states of Malaysia (Sarawak and Sabah) and Indonesia (East Kalimantan). The Highlands include the sub-districts of Krayan and Krayan Selatan (East Kalimantan); Bario, often known as the Kelabit Highlands; Ba’ Kelalan and Long Semadoh (Sarawak); and Ulu Padas (Sabah).

While administratively divided between two countries, the peoples of the Highlands share a common linguistic and cultural heritage, and a common homeland. The close ethnic and family ties of the peoples of the Highlands are one of the main reasons for the intense social and economic interactions that take place in the highlands across the international border between Indonesia and Malaysia. The main indigenous communities of the Highlands are: Lundayeh/Lun Bawang, Kelabit, Sa’ban, and Penan.

The Highlands in the Heart of Borneo contain one of the largest forested and traditionally farmed catchment areas on the island of Borneo. Some of the main rivers of Borneo originate from this important watershed and flow to both Malaysia and Indonesia. Forest cover secures climate stability at local level and mitigates negative effects of climate change. The Highlands are also home to a rich assemblage of megalithic monuments and archaeological remains, the silent witness to a long history of settlement in the area.

Players of traditional music at the inauguration of the Cultural Field School in Terang Baru, Krayan. (Photo credit: Sandra Tagal) ►



ABOUT FORMATAT

The idea to form a community forum between the peoples of the Highlands in Malaysia and in Indonesia came to late Datuk Dr. Judson Sakai Tagal, a former Sarawak Assistant Minister in the Sarawak Chief Minister Department, in 2003. He was determined to see the Highlands of Borneo develop in sustainable ways, while protecting the environment and preserving the culture and traditions of its peoples.

Inspired by the idea, the Lundayeh/Lun Bawang, Kelabit, and Sa'aban Indigenous Peoples of Bario, Ba'Kelalan, Long Semadoh (Sarawak), Ulu Padas (Sabah), Krayan



and Krayan Selatan, (Indonesia) got together and established the *Forum Masyarakat Adat Dataran Tinggi Borneo* (Alliance of the Indigenous Peoples of the Highlands of Borneo) or FORMADAT in Long Bawan (Krayan), October 2004. The initiative finds its legitimacy in the traditional leadership of the Highlands. The Krayan Selatan customary chief, Lewi G. Paru, is the Head of Formadat Indonesia, and the Ba' Kelalan customary chief, George Sigar Sultan, is the Head of Formadat Malaysia.

FORMATAT is a trans-boundary, grass-root initiative that aims to increase awareness and understanding about the communities of the Highlands, maintain cultural traditions, build local capacity, and encourage sustainable development in the Heart of Borneo without risking the degradation of the quality of the social and natural environment. The aim of FORMADAT is to encourage sustainable development by means of community-based ecotourism, organic farming and agro-forestry, communication and information technology, and the preservation of the cultural and natural heritage of the Highlands to benefit present and future generations. The organization of FORMADAT is comprised of FORMADAT Indonesia with the sub-districts of Krayan and Krayan Selatan; and FORMADAT Malaysia, with Bario, Ba' Kelalan, Long Semadoh, and Ulu Padas.

FORMATAT has already been formally registered in the district of Nunukan (Indonesia) and in Sarawak as a social organization, in accordance with legal requirements and procedures. If the process of registration might be necessarily different in respect of state sovereignty, the spirit, vision and mission of FORMADAT remain one and the same, and are clearly articulated in the organizational charters.

“The FORMADAT that we established in 2004 is a forum in our own backyard to serve the interests of all of us who live along the border of the Borneo highlands. This place we call ‘*patar dita*’ Borneo is the only homeland we the Lundayeh, Kelabit, Lun Bawang and Sa'ban have. Before, we went our separate way: we in the Krayan kept to ourselves; you in Sarawak kept to yourself; those in Sabah kept to themselves. We did not have an association to bring us together in one thought, one strength, to defend our land, our environment, our culture, our economic interest.”

Lewi G. Paru, Customary Chief of Krayan Hulu, 2006.

◀ Welcome ceremony in Terang Baru, Krayan. (Photo credit: Formadat)

FORMADAT VISION & MISSION

“We have no other homeland, save the ‘*patar dita*’ Borneo [Highlands] where we have lived for generations. We are of one root, one ancestor, one tradition. We are divided into two groups, a boundary drawn between us. We are in the Krayan, and you are in Sarawak and Sabah. Even though a boundary is drawn between us, we are of one root, one ancestor, one culture, one belief. FORMADAT is a forum to serve the interests of all of us who live along the border of the Borneo Highlands. This is a good forum. It unites us in one fellowship, one thought, one journey, to look after our homeland, our rights.”

Lewi G. Paru, Customary Chief of Krayan Hulu, 2006

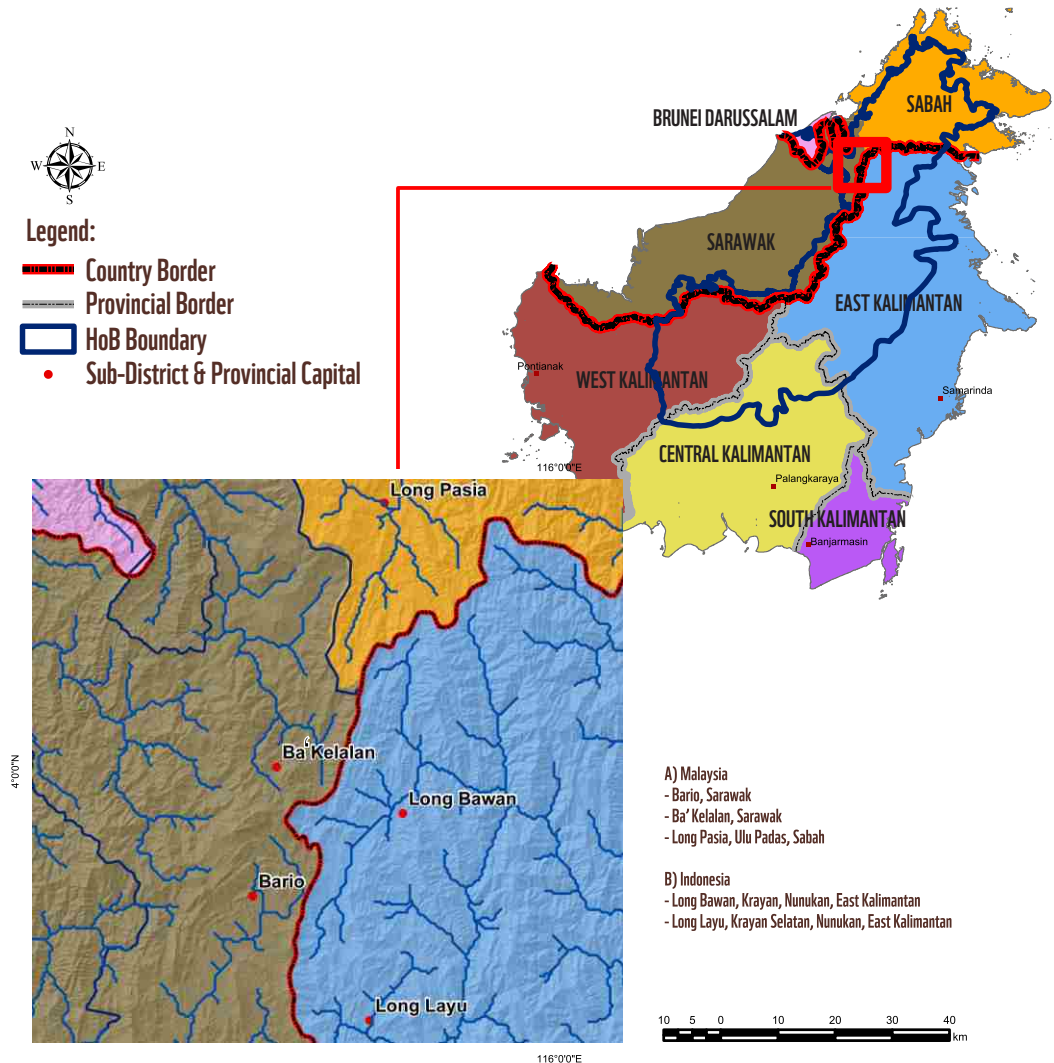
Vision:

The homeland of the Lundayeh/Lun Bawang, Kelabit and Sa’ban peoples in the Highlands of the Heart of Borneo is developed in fair and sustainable ways for the well being of the local peoples and the future generations.

Missions:

1. Maintain and strengthen the cultural traditions, language, customs and family bonds shared by all the Lundayeh/Lun Bawang, Kelabit and Sa’ban people in their common ancestral land of the Highlands of Borneo.
2. Encourage the development of sustainable economic alternatives such as organic agriculture and community-based ecotourism, and establish fair trading networks in the Highlands.
3. Encourage conservation and sustainable development for the Highlands, and ensure involvement and participation of the local Indigenous Peoples in all aspects.
4. Preserve water sources, river banks and community forests, protect cultural and historical sites, and the collective intellectual property rights of the Indigenous Peoples of the Highlands.

The Highlands of the Heart of Borneo





Rock carving at "*paru ating*" between Pa'Upan and Long Rungan, Krayan Selatan. (Photo credit: Andy Paul)



THE HIGHLANDS

Ba' Kelalan and Long Semadoh

The total population of Ba' Kelalan and Long Semadoh is 2,914 people. For the most part, they belong to the Lun Bawang peoples, the largest ethnic group in the area. The area is located at about 3,000 feet above sea level in the part of the Highlands called Maligan. The area borders with Krayan (Indonesia), Bario, and Ulu Padas. Ba' Kelalan is the closest and easiest entry point to Krayan from Malaysia. The main economic activity is cultivation of irrigated rice (adan rice and other varieties) and buffalo rearing. The area is also known for its apple orchard, the only one of its kind in Malaysia, salt springs, and heath forest with typical plants such as orchids, rhododendrons, and pitcher plants. Ba' Kelalan is an established ecotourism destination in Sarawak.



▲ A view of the rice fields in Ba' Kelalan. (Photo credit: Dora Jok)

◀ Rice harvest in Long Rusu, Ba' Kelalan. (Photo credit: Dora Jok)



▲ Bario leaders at a community meeting.
(Photo credit: Dr. Rahimatshah Amat)

Bario

Bario is made up of 14 villages with a resident population of about 1,200 people, mostly Kelabit peoples, the largest ethnic group in the area. The Kelabit highlands are located at about 3,200 feet above sea level, at the headwaters of the Baram River. The area borders with Krayan and Krayan Selatan (Indonesia), and Ba' Kelalan. The main economic activities are cultivation of irrigated rice and ecotourism. The adan rice from Bario is already a famous product. In addition, Bario is famous for sweet pineapples, cinnamon, and salt from natural springs in the area. There are still large patches of natural heath forest rich in unique flora like orchids, rhododendrons, and pitcher plants.

Ulu Padas

Ulu Padas is comprised of the villages of Long Pasia and Long Mio, in the southwest corner of Sabah. About 800 Lundayeh people live in Ulu Padas, the largest ethnic group in the area. Ulu Padas is located at about 3,000 feet above sea level in the Maligan highlands and borders with Krayan (Indonesia) and Long Semadoh. The main economic activities are rice cultivation and ecotourism. This area is known for the many varieties of orchids, rhododendrons, and pitcher plants, which can be easily observed in the community Heath Forest Botanical Garden of Long Pasia.



▲ A view of Long Pasia, Ulu Padas, Sabah.
(Photo credit: Rashidah Maqbool)



▲ Daan and Lepo, traditional building in the Cultural Field School compound near Terang Baru, Krayan. (Photo credit: FORMADAT)

Krayan

The Krayan sub-district consists of two customary lands, Krayan Hilir and Krayan Darat. Krayan is part of the district of Nunukan, East Kalimantan. More than 7,000 people live in the area distributed among 18 settlements (each settlement can be made up of two or more villages). The largest ethnic group in the area is the Lundayeh. The area is located at an elevation of about 3000 feet above sea level. Mountains and hills give way to large valleys where irrigated rice farming was developed. The main economic activity is rice cultivation, especially the famous adan rice of the Highlands. Local people also raise buffalos, produce salt, and trade across the border with Ba' Kelalan. The area is known for the quality and artistry of its handicrafts made of various natural materials (bamboo, rattan, reeds, etc). There is a famous Christian Theological School in Kampung Baru.

Krayan Selatan

The sub-district of Krayan Selatan consists of two customary lands, Krayan Hulu and Krayan Tengah. There are 24 villages and 6 settlements in the area that borders with Krayan and Bario (Sarawak). About 2,400 people of the Lundayeh and Sa'ban ethnic groups live in the area, and a small group of Punan people. The average elevation of the area is 3,000 feet above sea level. The main economic activities are irrigated and hill rice cultivation, and buffalo rearing. The cultivation of vanilla plants was also started in this area. Krayan Selatan is famous for the abundance of local fruit trees (durian, *maritam*, *mata kucing*, and more) and community-based ecotourism business is developing. Along the Krayan River, there are still areas of lowland forest habitat. Heath forest areas can be found in Paye Rungan and Paye Milau, both rich in unique biodiversity.



▲ Women coming back from the fields in Pa'Upan, Krayan Selatan. (Photo credit: Cristina Eghenter)

FORMADAT IN ACTION:

Local and global networks to preserve the culture and nature of the Highlands

1. Green & Fair Products in the Highlands. FORMADAT believes that sustainable economic alternatives that rely on the wise management of local resources and natural assets are really the key to foster development and well being in the Highlands of Borneo. FORMADAT promotes sustainable and organic farming, and the marketing of premium products such as local rice (adan Krayan rice; Bario rice), fruit, cinnamon, handicrafts, mountain salt.
2. The tele-centers of E-Bario, E-Ba'Kelalan, E-Krayan. With three operational Tele-Centers in the Highlands, a digital technology can effectively bridge the information divide and facilitate a communication network with the Highlands and with the outside world.
3. Trans-boundary community-based ecotourism in the Highlands. Communities and Tour Operators, with the support of local governments, are working together to develop fair ecotourism enterprises and promote this area in the Heart of Borneo for jungle trekking, village life and traditional culture, unique biodiversity, and the archaeology of the Highlands.
4. Cultural revival and the preservation of traditions. The Cultural Field School in Terang Baru (Krayan) is built in traditional style and serves as a center for training and learning about the cultural and artistic traditions of the Highlands. FORMADAT participated twice in the Rainforest World Music Festival (RWMF) in Kuching, Sarawak.
5. Raising awareness. Representatives of FORMADAT participated in the CBD COP X in Nagoya (2010), and in several international conferences in Malaysia and Indonesia.



1. Traditional ceremony in Terang Baru, Krayan (Photo credit: Rudi R). | 2. FORMADAT-Indonesia Chief congratulates speakers and representatives at the meeting on the rights and role of IPs in the sustainable development of the Highlands, Long Bawan (Krayan). | 3. Indigenous Peoples, FORMADAT leaders and government representatives meeting in Long Bawan (Krayan). | 4. An improvised traditional music jam session at the RWMF with FORMADAT members and the Malaysian Minister of Tourism, Kuching Sarawak. | 5. Tele center in Long Bawan, Krayan. (Photo credit: Sandra Tagal) | 6. Women of FORMADAT displaying typical products from the Highlands at the Rainforest World Music Festival in Kuching (Sarawak).



The Krayan River, Krayan Selatan. (Photo credit: Andy Paul)

FORMADAT & PARTNERS

FORMADAT is building a network of partners, friends and associates to work together in support of its activities. FORMADAT works with local organizations like LSM Tana Tam Krayan Hulu, E-Bario, the first community-based digital technology initiative in the Highlands of Borneo, and E-Ba' Kelalan. FORMADAT collaborate closely with various government agencies, national and international NGOs, and the private sector.

WWF-Indonesia and WWF-Malaysia are partners in the conservation and sustainable development mission of FORMADAT since the beginning. Another important partner of FORMADAT is Borneo Jungle Safari (BJS) for ecotourism development and promotion of the Highlands, in both countries. Other organizations work with FORMADAT, including: ITTO (International Timber Trade Organization), Rurum Kelabit Sarawak, Persatuan Lun Bawang, and Persatuan Dayak Lundayeh Kalimantan Timur (PDLKT).

Partnerships with other organizations and institutions that share the same vision is one way for FORMADAT to grow stronger and build support for sustainable development and prosperity in the Highlands of the Heart of Borneo.

Traditional ritual master at the CFS groundbreaking ceremony, Terang Baru, Krayan. (Photo credit: FORMADAT) ►





FORMADAT STRUCTURE

ADVISORS

CHIEF

Indonesia | Malaysia

HEAD of REGION

Krayan/Indonesia
Ba'Kelalan/Long Semadoh/Malaysia
Krayan Selatan/Indonesia
Long Pasia/Malaysia
Bario/Malaysia

COMMITTEES

Organic Farming
Customary Law & Practice
Conservation
Ecotourism
Culture & Arts
Women
Information & Communication



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