

Yogyakarta Funding Appeal:

Our orangutans and the Merapi volcano eruption

Many of you have heard the news about the double natural disasters of the Tsunami and the volcanic eruption striking Indonesia. First, we would like to thank all our friends and supporters from all around the world for the many emails, texts and phone calls regarding the safety of our staff and the orangutans being cared for in affected areas.



We wanted to give you a brief update about the situation in Yogyakarta. Pak Dudung, our Vice Director of Operations in Indonesia, was actually supposed to fly to Yogyakarta this week to take care of some paperwork for the new [Yogyakarta Orangutan Sanctuary](#), but due to the continuing eruptions of Mount Merapi there are no flights to Yogyakarta. Due to the panic in surrounding areas, our staff in Yogyakarta had been out of contact as they scrambled to deal with the ash and the needs of the animals. The ash actually has even reached Jakarta and our office in Bogor now. Near Yogyakarta the ash on the streets is several centimeters thick and colors everything in an eerie lunar gray. Breathing is hampered by the fine ash floating through the air and mass burials for the victims of the eruption are taking place.

Our center, located at more than 25 miles (40 km) from the crater of Mount Merapi, does not get any pumice or stones or hot ash clouds, but the fine ash is covering up almost all the fields and it is increasingly hard to get fresh fruit and vegetables for our orangutans. The roads are covered in nearly an inch (one to two centimeters) of fine ash, and are very slippery. This is making the acquisition of food from areas further away also much more cumbersome.



Also, almost all of our staff in Yogyakarta has some family that is affected by the eruption so we need to hire extra local hands to take care of the animals.

Merapi is showing no signs yet of letting up, so we want to take extra measures to make sure our orangutans are going to be fine. We want to put wet cloth above and around their cages so that we can create an effective fine ash filter for them. We will also give them extra vitamins and try to obtain fresh food from more remote locations so that we do not compete with the local people and their needs.

We realize that the people close to the volcano are much worse off than the orangutans and other animals in our center, but we hope some of you may want to consider helping us out with an extra donation to also help the orangutans at our Yogyakarta center. Anything you can help with will be highly appreciated.

Thank you for your support.
Willie Smits & Richard Zimmerman
Orangutan Outreach



This is the how the ash is coming down at our location in Yogyakarta, more than 40 kilometers from the crater!



Reuters picture not far from our Yogyakarta Orangutan Center.

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