



# Libano and Sulamesi Wildlife Management Areas

## Western and Southern Highlands Provinces Papua New Guinea



### Safeguarding Resources and Culture in the Bosavi Forests

**Location:** Mount Bosavi, Western and Southern Highlands Provinces

**Language:** Kosua **Villages:** Libano: Wabimisen, Wali and Fogomaiyu; Sulamesi: Sulamesi, Igiselebo and Iwatubu

**Purpose:** Libano and Sulamesi Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) are established on the customary lands of the Kosua peoples. The forests in the two areas are still largely intact and are primarily used for hunting, fishing and collecting bush materials for day-to-day livelihoods. The harvesting of the staple sago is also common. Communities have their own conservation practices and already have restricted sites protected well before the establishment of the WMAs. Butterfly farming is practiced by few farmers at Musula, Fogomaiyu and Wabimisen. Threats now come from industrial logging and oil and petroleum exploration. As population grows and more development enters the area, peoples attitudes towards protecting nature is changing.

Landowners decided to declare Libano and Sulamesi WMAs to: *Protect fish from becoming scarce; Preserve crocodiles; Protect wildlife and other resources; Protect sacred sites; Control over-fishing and over-hunting; Identify landmarks and boundaries; Protect medicinal plants; Protect s breeding homes for animals; protect the homes of special flying foxes; Prevent illegal trespass by strangers/outsideers; Prevent industrial logging coming inside this area; Protect the area from any spills of chemicals or wastes.*

**Management and Support:** The direct management authority and responsibility lies with the WMA committees who are elected by the local landowning community. Monitoring and technical support are now provided by WWF in partnership with Oilsearch and the CDI Foundation.



Forest path, Sulamesia WMA



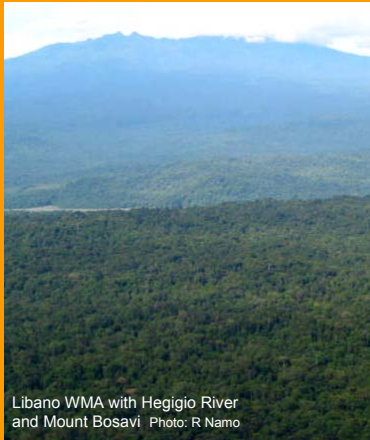
Butterfly farming, Sulamesia WMA



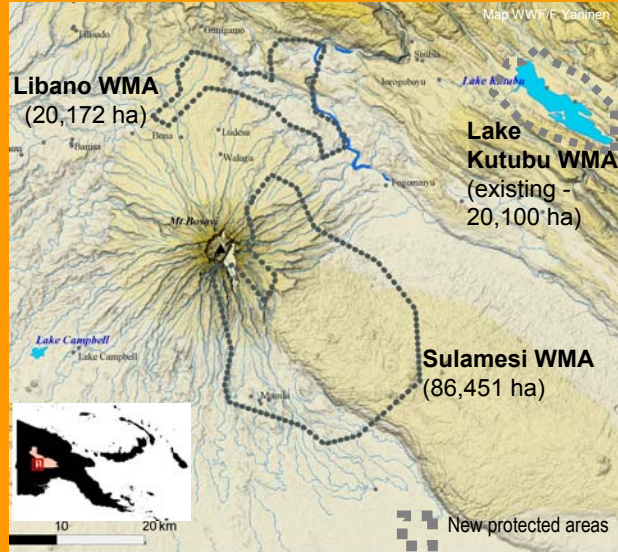
Coroneted fruit doves



Wassi falls, Mubi River



Libano WMA with Hegigio River and Mount Bosavi Photo: R Namu



Musula village, Sulamesia WMA



Developing rules for Sulamesia WMA Photo: R Namu



Oil production facilities, Lake Kutubu

### Kikori River Basin – A Biodiversity Hotspot Under Pressure

There are few more dramatic landscapes on earth than the Mount Bosavi region. This 2,400 m extinct volcano, rises out of deeply creviced limestone hills. In the distance is the dramatic Wassi Falls (a clear rival to Niagara) and Lake Kutubu with its 12 endemic fish species. Together, the Kikori River catchment is one of the most spectacular in the Asia Pacific.

But it is not just the scenery that is important. This region supports more unique animal species than many other parts of New Guinea. As well as birds of paradise, cassowaries and crocodiles, there are a number of threatened species such as the Lowlands Tree kangaroo, the Long Beaked Echidna, the New Guinea Sheath-tailed Bat, Campbell's Fairy Wren and the reclusive Chestnut Forest-Rail. Libano and Sulamesi WMAs provide vital habitat for these species and protects parts of two sub-catchments of the Kikori River.

This is a region under extreme pressure. Unsustainable logging has decimated much of the lowland rainforests of Gulf Province. Roads are starting to open up access to the area from the Highlands and a proposed US\$ 3.5 billion gas pipeline development will bring untold changes.

Under a river basin management programme focusing on Lake Kutubu and the Kikori river, WWF is working with communities, NGOs and the private sector to assist other communities seeking to establish new protected areas and to promote more sustainable use of the forests and rivers.

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