



## **PRESS RELEASE**

*for immediate release*

# **The Rimba Collective Scales Up its Impact for Communities and Nature in East Kalimantan, Adding Over 160,000 Hectares to its Portfolio**

**18 December 2025, Singapore** – In the heart of Borneo, a new chapter is unfolding for Indonesia’s forests and the communities who call them home. Building on a proven track record, the Rimba Collective is partnering with the Nusantara Climate Initiative (NCI) and is proud to announce the launch of the Wahea-Tabang Project. Working hand-in-hand with local villages, this new initiative will invest in livelihoods, education, and health, ensuring that conservation delivers lasting benefits for both people and nature.

### **Building on the Rimba Collective’s Track Record**

Fully operational since 2022, the Rimba Collective has shown what is possible when local communities, conservation experts, and committed companies join forces for the long term. Over the past three years, the Collective has protected forests, improved livelihoods, and refined its approach through continuous learning and partnership. With the addition of Wahea-Tabang project, we are now safeguarding more than 470,000 hectares of tropical forest across Southeast Asia (Indonesia and the Philippines), steadily advancing toward our ambitious goal of 550,000 hectares by 2026. These on-the-ground implementation experiences have shaped a robust model for forest conservation, rooted in collaboration and measurable impact.

Now, with three years of implementation behind it, the Rimba Collective is entering an ambitious scale-up phase, expanding its reach and deepening its impact across East Kalimantan.

### **Scaling Conservation in Borneo: 160,000 Hectares for People and Nature**

The Wahea-Tabang Project, operated by NCI, aims to protect and restore over 160,000 hectares of vital forest across two large-scale project areas, now managed as a single integrated landscape. This living landscape is home to endangered wildlife, ancient trees, and vibrant communities. The project represents a large-scale transition from extractive land use to long-term conservation, restoration, and community stewardship. It is being developed as an integrated corridor that delivers climate mitigation, biodiversity protection, and inclusive development outcomes.

Across the landscape, conservation and restoration efforts support the wellbeing of around 5,500 people in at least 16 villages, through sustainable livelihoods, women’s empowerment, and



improved access to health services, clean water, and education. Ecologically, the Wahea-Tabang Project safeguards and reconnects habitats for 40 threatened species listed on the IUCN Red List, including Bornean orangutan, gibbons, sun bears, hornbills, pangolins, and long-tailed macaques—strengthening one of Borneo’s most important forest corridors.

Over a 25-year horizon, the project has the potential to avoid and remove more than **14.5 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>**, plant over 500,000 trees, and secure the long-term conservation and restoration of vast forest areas, demonstrating how integrated, non-extractive land-use models can deliver durable climate, nature, and community benefits at scale.

Both project areas are being developed with the goal of achieving Climate, Community & Biodiversity (CCB) certification. Uniquely, this project is pioneering a non-carbon payment for ecosystem services model, in which financial support is directly linked to the delivery of measurable conservation, community, and biodiversity outcomes—rather than the sale of carbon credits.

### **Lessons Learned on Community-Led Conservation and the Scale-Up Momentum**

The journey so far has shown that conservation is as much about the communities at its forefront as it is about the natural ecosystems that are the backbone of life on earth. By listening to local voices, adapting to challenges, and celebrating every milestone, big or small, the Rimba Collective has built trust and momentum for lasting change.

### **A Shared Vision for the Future**

*“This scale-up marks a pivotal moment for the Rimba Collective and for the future of forestry concessions in Indonesia. By working with NCI to transition over 160,000 hectares from traditional logging to conservation and community-led stewardship, we are demonstrating that alternative business models for forestry concessions are not only viable, but can deliver measurable outcomes for climate, biodiversity, and livelihoods. This approach strengthens the resilience of production landscapes by integrating conservation into the broader land-use mosaic, supporting both ecological connectivity and sustainable economic opportunities for local communities.*

*Our partnership shows that when finance, local engagement, and long-term vision move in step, sustainable land-use becomes investable at scale, and delivers durable value for people and nature.”*  
- **Michal Zrust**, Founder & CEO, Lestari Capital

*“This partnership between Nusantara Climate Initiative (NCI) and Lestari Capital reflects a shared commitment to advancing sustainable conservation at scale. By integrating forest protection, landscape restoration, and community-led livelihoods, we are strengthening critical buffer areas and ecological corridors that safeguard adjacent protected areas while creating inclusive economic opportunities for local communities.*



*Through our collaboration in the Wahea-Tabang Project, we are aligning long-term conservation goals with measurable climate and biodiversity outcomes. Importantly, this partnership marks a transition toward sustainable, non-extractive land-use models led by landowners, demonstrating that conservation-based businesses are viable, investable, and ready to scale. Together, we show that durable impact emerges when conservation, finance, and community stewardship move forward as one.” – **Barakalla Robyn**, Executive Director, NCI*

### **Other Rimba Collective Projects in Borneo**

In addition to the Wahea-Tabang Project, the Rimba Collective supports several other community-driven conservation and restoration initiatives across Borneo, including:

- **KPSHK (Central Kalimantan):** Community-managed peat-swamp forest restoration across four Village Forests (13,265 ha), focusing on peatland, biodiversity, and sustainable livelihoods. [Read more](#)
- **SUAR (West Kalimantan):** Conservation and restoration in three Village Forests (10,377 ha), supporting agroforestry and biodiversity monitoring. [Read more](#)
- **Bentang Kalimantan Tangguh – BKT Phase II (West Kalimantan):** Nature restoration and community patrols over 14,249 ha, with a strong local governance model. [Read more](#)

Together, these projects highlight the Rimba Collective’s commitment to large-scale, community-led conservation across Borneo.

### **About the Rimba Collective**

The [Rimba Collective](#) is a pioneering, 30-year conservation finance initiative that is transforming how companies invest in nature. Managed by Lestari Capital and supported by leading consumer goods companies, it connects corporate commodity sourcing to measurable ecosystem outcomes across Southeast Asia—including forest conservation, biodiversity protection, and community well-being. Through this model, the Collective aims to channel up to US\$1 billion into forest conservation and restoration by 2050, safeguarding up to 1 million hectares of forests while creating long-term value for communities and businesses alike.

### **About Lestari Capital**

[Lestari Capital](#) is a leading impact investment platform dedicated to financing nature-based solutions across Southeast Asia. By connecting corporate sustainability commitments with high-integrity conservation and restoration projects, Lestari Capital mobilizes long-term capital to deliver measurable outcomes for climate, biodiversity, and communities. Through its flagship



initiative, the Rimba Collective, Lestari Capital partners with local organizations, governments, and communities to scale up forest protection, landscape restoration, and sustainable livelihoods. The company's innovative finance models and rigorous due diligence ensure that investments generate durable, transparent, and transformative impact for people and nature.

### **About NCI**

**Nusantara Climate Initiative (NCI)** is an Indonesian-based organization dedicated to advancing nature-based solutions that deliver measurable benefits for climate, biodiversity, and communities. Established in 2023, NCI works to catalyse a shift from extractive land use to nature-positive conservation landscapes that generate long-term ecological and social value. Through partnerships with local communities, NCI implements programs that integrate forest protection, ecosystem restoration, and livelihood development, ensuring conservation outcomes are aligned with inclusive economic opportunities. NCI brings technical expertise in project design, monitoring, and governance, positioning itself as a trusted partner for large-scale conservation initiatives across Indonesia.

### **For media enquiries, please contact:**

**Marion Daras-Carlier**

Head of Communications, Lestari Capital  
[m.daras@lestaricapital.com](mailto:m.daras@lestaricapital.com)

**Yessi Agustina**

Head of Communication, Nusantara Climate Initiative  
[Yessi.Agustina@nusantaraclimate.co.id](mailto:Yessi.Agustina@nusantaraclimate.co.id)