

Kaitan Distribusi Gajah Sumatera (*Elephas maximus sumatranus* Temminck) dengan Kondisi Habitat di Hutan Tesso Nilo, Riau

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to determine the link between distribution of Sumatran elephant to habitat conditions in Tesso Nilo Forest. Survey was conducted using indirect method by seeing the dung of elephant, footsteps, and another marks distribution of elephant along the journey route to the sample block and in transect. Marks distribution of elephant data was collected to develop an elephant distribution map and qualitative analysis based on habitat conditions was used for description. The transects were made 600–2.000 m long and 10 m wide at the sample blocks. The dung density of A, B, and C categories per km of transect was calculated to support analysis. Survey also collected habitat conditions as follows: vegetation type, trees (dbh up 20 cm) density, forest cover, topography, and hydrology. Quadrant plot of 20 x 20 m were made by line plot systematic sampling design to observe vegetation parameters, with the distance among plots were 200 m in transect. Results from 32 transects made, with total of 39.35 km, showed dung density in mosaic forest and open areas stratum is higher than in fragmented forest stratum. Dung mostly were found on shrubs because elephants like to eat some clumps and herbs. Elephants mostly distributed around Nilo River and Air Hitam Kanan River, and several of its stream (Onangan, Doli, Toro, Air Sawan, Tembago, and Petatal). Elephants were dispersed in flat slope (0-8%), low slope (8,1-15%), and even medium steep slopes (15,1-25%).

Keywords: distribution of Sumatran elephant, habitat conditions, Tesso Nilo Forest.