

Lesson 3: Resource Sheet 4

Threats to Orangutans

There are a number of threats to the wild orangutan population on the island of Borneo: deforestation, fires, poaching and the illegal pet trade.

The main threat is loss of habitat through deforestation (mainly for the development of palm oil plantations) and fires. Already up to 80 per cent of suitable forest in Indonesia and Malaysia have been lost in the past 20 years. Other threats include the illegal pet trade and poaching.

Today about 57,000 orangutans survive in the wild on the island of Borneo. The population declines by between 3,000 and 5,000 every year.

If the rate of habitat loss is not slowed the orang-utans could be extinct in the wild within 10–20 years.



Source: Shutterstock