

## SEEDS OF CHANGE

See just how IKEA is working to help the environment. Join IKEA FAMILY LIVE as it goes deep into the tropics of Borneo to reveal an intensive conservation project IKEA is supporting

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### Giving something back to nature

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**In northeast Borneo IKEA is supporting an environmental and social project that is set to have a global impact as well as improve the devastated local forest. Take a look at what's been going on behind the scenes...**



#### Forests for the future

Timber is the source of half of IKEA's products. As part of its commitment to responsible, sustainable timber usage, and helping improve forestry management worldwide, IKEA has been contributing to a forestry conservation project in Borneo that will give something back to nature.



#### A meeting of minds

Sow A Seed, as IKEA's project is known, is currently helping to restore 18,500 hectares depleted by logging and further ravaged by fire in 1983. It's a project that IKEA's founder, Ingvar Kamprad, became committed to after meeting Dr Jan Falck, a lecturer in forestry at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences.



#### Growing support

Jan's work, testing new, more sustainable logging techniques in the area, was the inspiration for a huge rehabilitation effort. Over the past eight years, IKEA has invested around US\$750,000 a year to support Sow A Seed, Jan's logging research, and also facilities in the nearby unspoiled Maliau Basin conservation area.



**MALIAU BASIN CONSERVATION AREA**  
**WHAT? 39,000 hectares of pristine wilderness with 12 different rainforest ecosystems, all in virgin condition**  
**WHERE? Sabah, northeast Borneo**  
**IKEA'S CONTRIBUTION to conservation in the Maliau basin includes:**

- Building a jungle camp suspension bridge
- Creating a forest canopy observation walkway 30m up into the treetops
- Raising a 20m observation tower on a ridge high above the forest
- Funding a conservation study centre that will share research with scientists and students worldwide



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#### Ground force

Luasong, a village in the heart of the Kalabakan Forest Reserve in the Sabah region and a state-run forestry centre, is the hub of Sow A Seed's activities. It's here that seeds are germinated from some 300,000 tree specimens at the project's nursery and seedlings, the basis for a self-regenerating forest are nurtured.



#### Down to work

A further 130 employees carry out forestry work in the field. One of them, Jecklis, uses a parang – a big machete – to hack away the invading creepers. 'They must be cut in two places,' he explains, 'or the ends may fuse again.' The team also weeds, replants and ensures enough light reaches the saplings.



#### Animal attraction

As the forest comes back to life, so, it is hoped, will local wildlife such as orang-utans and clouded leopards. 'Endangered animals are increasingly being forced back into pockets of intact forest,' says Dr Yap Sau Wai, a state research and development manager. 'This is why five percent of the trees planted are wild fruit trees, for food.'



#### The results

So what are the results of all this work and investment? Well, to date some 7,000 hectares of burnt forest – an area the size of 11,000 football pitches – have been replanted with over a million trees. In the Maliau Basin, work has included the building of a 30m-high treetop walkway, an observation tower and a research centre.



#### Global rehabilitation?

The conservation research carried out here may have a more far-reaching influence. 'We can now demonstrate that one hectare of rainforest can be rehabilitated for US\$700,' notes Jan. 'That's incredibly useful knowledge for governments or forestry organisations.'



#### Employee benefits

When it helped set up Sow A Seed, IKEA decided not to farm the work out to contractors, but to create a community of involved workers instead. 'Our fieldworkers return to the plots every year to monitor progress, and now they have an emotional attachment to the project,' remarks project manager David Aloysius.



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#### Home comforts

In line with the broader IKEA employment policies, the workers themselves have felt the benefits of the company's investment. Employees are offered free family health care and a place in one of the homes built by IKEA locally. Each home has fresh water, a kitchen and bathroom.



#### A great future

Employees have prospects, too, such as the chance to train in everything from team management and computer skills to first aid. 'It's a nice, natural place to live and work,' says Annika, a nursery employee. 'I am from Sabah's capital Kota Kinabalu. There it is dirty and everything is about money. Here is a good place to raise children.'

