



Media Release
28th November 2010

Red Head Go Free Promotion at Dublin Zoo Raises €10,000 for Orang utan Awareness

The 'red head go free' promotion run by Dublin Zoo during Orang utan Awareness Week was a fantastic success and raised €10,000 to secure land in the Samboja Lestari Rainforest in Borneo.

During the week Dublin Zoo held a number of events, one of which offered free entry to red head children or children who dressed as Orang utans, and activities to educate and inform guests about the conservation of the species. The promotion achieved widespread publicity which contributed greatly to the phenomenal success of Orang utan Awareness Week.

Director of Dublin Zoo Leo Oosterweghel, said "It was great to see the promotion was received in the light hearted way it was intended. We raised €10,000 which will go towards the survival of the orang utans in their natural habitat and we would like to thank everyone who contributed and supported Orang utan Awareness Week. We know that orang utans will be very grateful."

The biggest threat facing orang utans in the wild is the destruction of their habitats. The rainforests in Sumatra and Borneo that are home to these primates are being destroyed by urban growth, palm oil plantations and farming.

Bornean Orang utan Survival Foundation (BOS)

Samboja Lestari is an area of restored tropical rainforest near the city of Balikpapan in East Kalimantan, Borneo created by the Borneo Orang utan Survival Foundation led by Dr Willie Smits, with the aim of providing a safe haven for rehabilitated orang utans.

The BOS Foundation runs a number of projects and activities designed to help save the orang utan and its forest habitat. BOS is the largest primate rescue project in the world, with nearly 1,000 orang utans in its care. BOS is committed to protecting the orang utan and its rainforest habitat, and relies entirely on donations to achieve this.

The Samboja Lestari Project boasts a reforested area of 2,000 hectares with 1,800 species of trees. Securing the future for this area means that BOS can secure a future for the survival of the orang utan in the wild.

For more information on orang utan awareness please visit www.dublinzoo.ie, www.redapes.org and www.orangaware.org.

- Ends -

For more information, please contact:

Justine Luykx/ Kelley Cousins, Pembroke Communications, 086 2695953/086 859 5597,
Justine@pembrokecomms.ie/ Kelley@pembrokecomms.ie

Notes to Editor:

- In 2009, Dublin Zoo sponsored 700m² (€2,100) of rainforest in Borneo as part of Samboja Lestari rainforest regeneration programme being run by the Bornean Orangutan Survival Foundation.
- **Samboja Lestari** is an area of restored tropical rainforest near the city of Balikpapan in East Kalimantan, Borneo created by the Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation (BOS) led by Dr Willie Smits, with the aim of providing a safe haven for rehabilitated orangutans while at the same time providing a source of income for local people.
- The project covers nearly 2,000 hectares (7.7 sq mi) of deforested, degraded and burnt land.
- In 2001 BOS began purchasing land near Samboja that, like much of the deforested land in Borneo, had been by impoverished by mechanical logging, drought and severe fires and was now covered in alang-alang grass (*Imperata cylindrica*).
- The name Samboja Lestari roughly translates as the "Samboja Forever". Reforestation and orang utan rehabilitation is the core of this acclaimed but controversial project, with hundreds of indigenous tree species planted.
- By the middle of 2006 over 740 different tree species had been planted; by 2009 there were 1200 species of trees, 137 species of birds and nine species of primates.