



Wanang Conservation Area

Wanang Village, Gama Rural LLG,
Usino Bundi District,
Madang province, Papua New Guinea



The reason for Wanang Conservation...

Our forest is our life

- Our ancestors took care of our forest and we too must take care of the forest
- Many good things come from the forest: food, building material, medicine, forest spirits, water, and cool breezes.
- Our hunting dogs told us to conserve our forests
- We take care of our forest and land and rivers because we want our children to know everything in the forest.
- You cannot forget the way of the ancestors, you must follow their lead
- We will die, but our children must take care of our forest and their children after that must take care of our forest.

The logging company will ruin your forest...

If you sell your forest to the logging company, your forest, land and rivers will be ruined and you will live in poverty.

We do not like the logging company because they will ruin everything:

- Drinking water
- Forest spirits
- Hunting sites
- River pools
- Fishing sites
- Big shade trees
- Bird song
- Forest scents
- Forest medicine

I do not worry about money. I worry about my forest.

Everything in the forest is free.

If the forest is gone, life will be hard.

You cannot just think of now, you must think of tomorrow.

The story of Wanang Conservation

The threat of logging

When industrial logging started near Wanang, the villagers observed the changes in the environment and the difficulties it generated for the traditional lifestyle. So when the middle Ramu River basin was designated as a logging concession, the villagers of Wanang worked with Bismark Ramu Group to form a legally binding deed that created a village-based protected area prohibiting logging. Eleven clans signed the deed, nine of which persevered through bribes and violence propagated by loggers intending to thwart their conservation efforts.

An great partnership

Although, the villagers knew they did not want logging they did desire economic opportunity. Their leader, Filip Damen, sot out numerous organizations (VDT, TNC, Cuso, VSO, FTCP, etc) seeking support that fit their needs. He introduced himself to Binatang Research Center (BRC) and invited them to conduct entomological research in Wanang. The villagers were not sure what to expect but they diligently prepared for their visitors, clearing a community area and building a house. The first scientists that came to Wanang conducted small scale studies that typically lasted a few weeks but the relationship between BRC and the village continued to grow with BRC bringing larger and larger research projects to Wanang. The community looked after their visitors, worked as their field assistants, and ensured that the forest spirits allowed the research to be conducted without incident.



The fruits of our labor

In 2006, a large three year project began examining the structure of insect and tree relationships through the felling of two 1-ha forest plots. The scientists with the support of WWF helped the villagers to map their protected area to gain formal recognition of their conservation area. The success of the felled plots and the resolution of the landowners to continue conservation, led scientists to imagine larger and longer term research in Wanang. The scientists and villagers garnered support from Swire and Sons Pty Ltd. and Steamships Pty Ltd. to build a permanent research station, support community development, and establish the first 50 ha long term forest dynamic research plot in this part of the world.

Local community to global community

The extraordinary efforts of the Wanang villagers have received international recognition and enabled the Wanang community make global connections. In 2009, Filip Damen traveled to Malibu to receive the Seacology Indigenous Conservationist award for his leadership. In 2010, he was acknowledged by Conde Nast Traveler as a runner up for their annual Environmental Award. In 2010, ten clan leaders were invited to Port Moresby to be honored by Swire and Sons Pty Ltd at the official launch party for the Swire PNG rainforest study. Five Wanang villagers traveled to the YUS Conservation Area to share their ideas and experiences on an exchange sponsored by Christenson Research Fund. Five Wanang villagers participated in a university-level field ecology course taught within their conservation area alongside international and PNG national students.



Wanang Conservation Deed

Developed with the assistance of Bismark-Ramu Group

THE DEED

1. This Deed is a binding agreement made by the following clans:
Alkapke, Kaipsakang, Iga, Babugu, Katam, Kai, Mudd, Kmevung,
Wanasakang, Igumana and ~~Garisakang~~ **KAMBASAKANG SALDON**
2. We control those areas of land described and marked on the map set out at the bottom of this Deed.
3. We agree to conserve our land and agree to develop our land on our terms.
4. We agree to work together to conserve the bush, ground and water on our land.
5. We agree that we will NOT sign a Forest Management Agreement (F.M.A) with the Forest Authority.
6. We agree that we will NOT enter into any agreement to allow timber to be harvested under a Timber Authority (T.A).
7. We agree that no one will be invited onto our land without all clans consenting.
8. We agree to work together to set up a way to control development on our land.
9. We recognise that this Deed is a legal document which binds the parties to their promises and can be enforced in the National Court.
10. This Deed will still be in force even if one of the persons who signs it dies or gets very sick.
11. If a person who signs this Deed on behalf of the clan dies or gets too sick, we agree, that clan must appoint a new person. When a new person is appointed, they should sign the Deed again to show that the clan is still bound by the Deed. However, even if that person does not sign, the Deed will still remain in force.
12. This Deed will be signed by person(s) appointed by the clan as the person(s) who are authorised to sign on behalf of the clan.
13. The Deed will be signed in public, in front of the clan who have instructed the person(s) appointed by them to sign it

Wanang Conservation Board

Chairman: Jepi Ropi

Vice chairman: Samual Mansa

Secretary: Samuel Japi

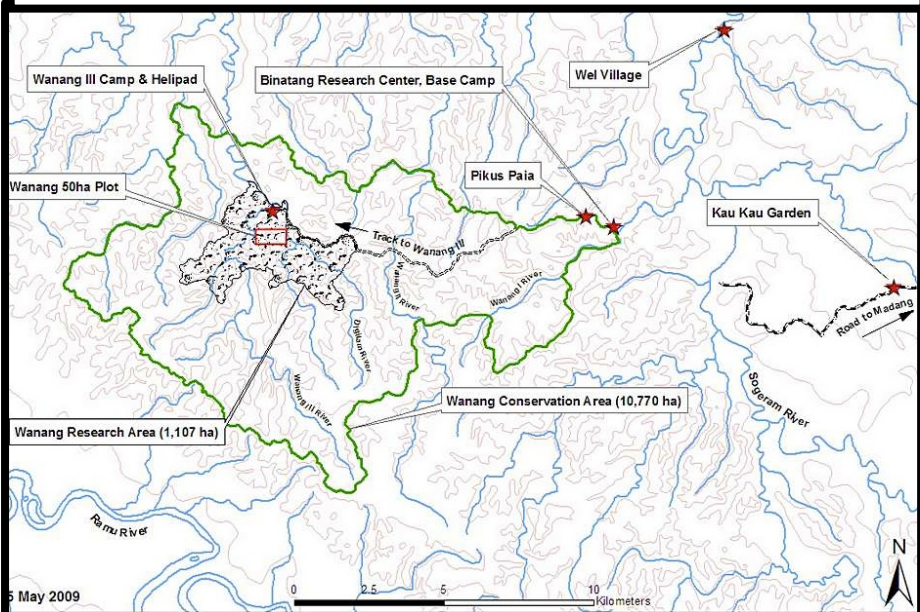
Treasurer: Albert Mansa

Board members: Filip Damen
Paul Hangre
Jonathan Kepe
Ukiem Kepe
Paul Mansa
Samson Mareba
Aron Sam
Rosa Samson
Saldon Yabi



Wanang Conservation Area and Research Area

Wanang landowners put 10,000 hectares into the village-based protected area that prohibits logging but allows moderate traditional forest use. Within the conservation area is a 1000-2000 hectare research area that prohibits all extractive activities.



Research Area Rules

- No knives
- No cutting of trees or vines
- No gardens or firewood gathering
- No harassing or killing animals and fish
- No dogs
- No fires
- No gardens or houses near the research area boundary

*Swire station workers cannot hunt and fish in the research area, the scientists provide food for this reason. Workers cannot take bow and arrows, spears, wires, or dogs to Swire Station. Also workers need to respect and look after the station and the station's property.



The power of conservation is in the hands of the landowners. We take care of our forest, land and rivers ourselves. The government and logging company will not take care of our forest. This is our own work. Anyone who wants to come here must follow the landowners' rules.



You cannot just think of now, you must think about the future.

We do not worry about now, we worry about our children's future.





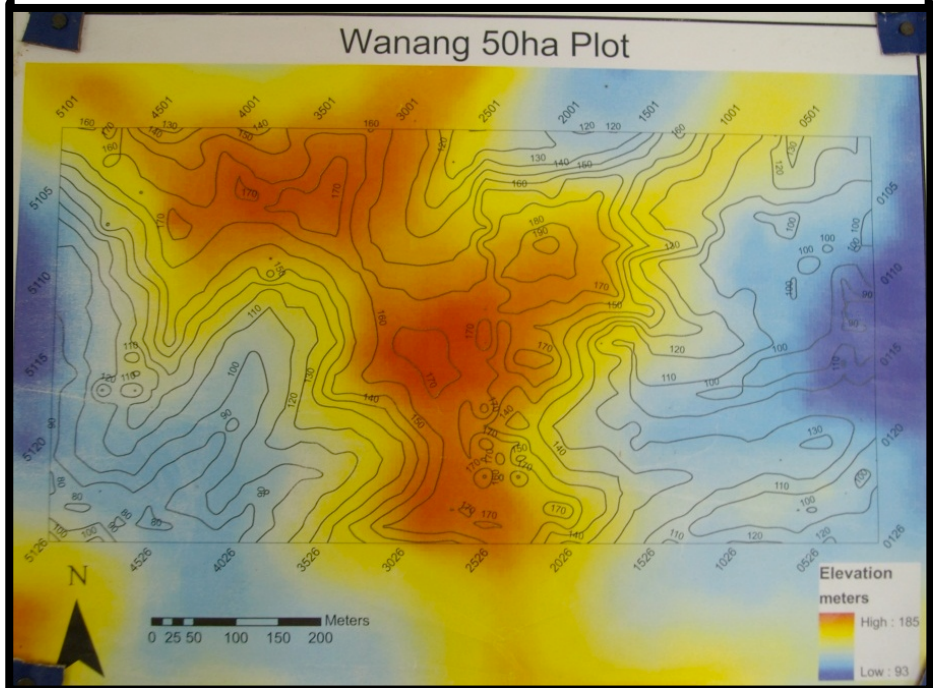
Swire Research Station

Wanang, Swire and the Binatang Research Center worked together to establish the Swire Research Station in the Wanang conservation area adjacent to the CTFS 50 ha plot. The station consists of accommodation, laboratory space, solar and generator power, a rain fed water system, and radio communication.



Wanang 50 Hectare Forest Plot

Wanang is home of the only 50 hectare forest dynamics study plot in this part of the world. The Center for Tropical Forest Studies has established a series of 50 ha plots around the world to understand the effects of climate change on forests. This is the first plot of its kind in PNG, Australia or New Zealand and is of global importance. The Wanang plot is the result of collaboration between Wanang villagers, Binatang Research Center, Harvard, the Smithsonian, the University of Minnesota, Swire, and Steamships. Wanang villagers have tagged measured, and identified over 250,000 trees in the plot and measured and mapped the topography.



Visitors

Wanang has attracted visitors from around the world including, Australia, Czech Republic, England, USA, France, and Sri Lanka. Wanang villagers are pleased to invite visitors to their conservation area. Visitor fees are used by the community for conservation and community needs as the conservation board approves. Wanang villagers like to learn from visitors just as visitors hope to learn about Wanang, so the community requests that visitors inform the conservation board of the purpose of their stay. We welcome low impact research in our research area and higher impact research in our adjacent landholding.



Gate fee

Overseas visitor	Duration of stay	Fee
Single person	Less than 1 week	K 200
Single person	More than 1 week	K 450
Group (3 or more)	Less than 1 week	K 500
Group (3 or more)	More than 1 week	K 1000

PNG citizen	Duration of stay	Fee
Single person	Less than 1 week	K 50
Single person	More than 1 week	K 100
Group (3 or more)	Less than 1 week	K 150
Group (3 or more)	More than 1 week	K 500

Mixed groups of overseas visitors and PNG citizens pay overseas group fee, or separately single fees for each visitor depending on their choice.



Wanang Field Assistants

Wanang villagers are happy to work with visiting scientists in the field. They have field experience in botany, ethnobiology, entomology, and ornithology and are eager to acquire new skills.





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Stuart Wilson/Science Photo Library



Wanang Conservation School



GAGAM AMUL GSNG

Tu hat bilong asde

The fruits of our labor

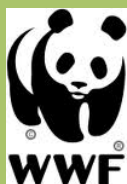


The Wanang conservation school started as a Sunday school with New Guinea Binatang staff and led to the idea for a primary school. Wanang conservation school was established in 2009 by the Wanang community with the support of Binatang Research Center, Swire, and Steamships. The school is the first in the area and began with prep and grade 1 under the guidance of Mr. Waim the headmaster and has expanded each year. The classrooms were constructed by villagers using bush materials and supplies were purchased with conservation funds. In 2012, the community added the elementary school, received government registration and support, and began the construction of a permanent school building with the support of Seacology.

Partners and Contributors



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Driven to DiscoverSM



Village Development Trust
Integrated Initiatives for eco-forestry and sustainable development

Contact information

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<http://www.entu.cas.cz/png/wanang/homepage>