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## **Environmental Law Enforcement Problems Regarding the Protection of Protected Animals in the Sumatran Tiger Death Incident in Mukomuko Regency, Bengkulu in 2026**

**Muhamad Aldi Syahputra<sup>1\*</sup>**<sup>1</sup>Magister Ilmu Hukum, Universitas Bengkulu, Indonesia, [aldisyahputra361@gmail.com](mailto:aldisyahputra361@gmail.com)\*Corresponding Author: [aldisyahputra361@gmail.com](mailto:aldisyahputra361@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** The death of a Sumatran tiger (*Panthera tigris sumatrae*) in Mukomuko Regency, Bengkulu, in 2026 is a clear indicator of serious problems in the effectiveness of environmental law in Indonesia. This study aims to analyze the problems of environmental law enforcement regarding the protection of protected animals through a case study of the death of the Sumatran tiger. The research method used is normative juridical with a legislative and conceptual approach. The analysis was conducted using the theory of sustainable development and the precautionary principle. The results of the study indicate a significant gap between regulatory aspects (law on books)—such as Law No. 5 of 1990 and Law No. 32 of 2009—and its implementation in the field (law in action). The main problems stem from weak supervision of conservation areas, lack of coordination between institutions, and the dominance of repressive approaches (sanctions) compared to preventive approaches (preventing habitat damage and resolving human-animal conflicts). This study concludes that effective environmental law enforcement requires strengthening integrated preventive policies and habitat monitoring based on comprehensive ecosystem sustainability.

**Keyword:** Environmental Law, Sumatran Tiger, Law Enforcement, Protected Animals

### **INTRODUCTION**

The environment is a unified space encompassing objects, forces, conditions, and living creatures, including humans and their behavior, that influence the continuity of life and the balance of the ecosystem. Wildlife plays a crucial ecological role in maintaining environmental stability, and therefore, its existence requires protection through effective and sustainable legal policies. (Supriadi, 2008)

The Sumatran tiger (*Panthera tigris sumatrae*) is a protected species endemic to Indonesia and plays a vital role in the forest ecosystem. However, the discovery of a dead Sumatran tiger in Mukomuko Regency, Bengkulu, in 2026 raised serious environmental law concerns. This incident not only concerns wildlife protection but also highlights issues with the effectiveness of habitat protection, environmental oversight, and law enforcement for protected animals.

Normatively, environmental protection and wildlife conservation are regulated through Law No. 32 of 2009 concerning Environmental Protection and Management and Law No. 5 of 1990 concerning the Conservation of Biological Natural Resources and their Ecosystems. However, in practice (law in action), various problems such as poaching, human-wildlife conflict, habitat destruction, and weak oversight of conservation areas still frequently occur. This indicates a gap between legal regulations and their implementation on the ground. (Alvi Syahrin, 2009)

According to modern environmental law, environmental protection is not solely achieved through repressive legal enforcement, but also through preventive measures that prioritize environmental sustainability as a crucial component of sustainable development. Effective environmental law enforcement must ensure the protection of biodiversity, including protected animals and their habitats. Therefore, the death of the Sumatran tiger in Mukomuko Regency requires a more in-depth study to understand the challenges of environmental law enforcement in protecting protected animals in Indonesia. (Rofi Wahanisa dan Septhian Eka Adiyatma, 2021)

## **METHOD**

This study aims to analyze the challenges of environmental law enforcement regarding the protection of protected wildlife, using the case study of the Sumatran tiger's death. The research method used is normative juridical, with a legislative and conceptual approach. The analysis is conducted using sustainable development theory and the precautionary principle.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Legal Basis**

The protection of protected animals as part of environmental protection has a strong legal basis in the Indonesian legal system. Article 28H paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia affirms that everyone has the right to a good and healthy environment. This right to the environment demonstrates that the state has an obligation to guarantee environmental sustainability, including the protection of biodiversity and wildlife.

More specifically, environmental protection is regulated by Law Number 32 of 2009 concerning Environmental Protection and Management. Furthermore, wildlife protection is regulated by Law Number 5 of 1990 concerning the Conservation of Biological Natural Resources and their Ecosystems. Both regulations place conservation and habitat protection as crucial instruments in maintaining environmental balance.

According to Daud Silalahi, environmental law is basically a legal instrument that functions to maintain order in the relationship between humans and the environment in order to create a sustainable ecosystem. (Daud Silalahi, 2001) Thus, the protection of the Sumatran Tiger is not only understood in the context of animal protection alone, but is also related to the protection of the environment as a whole.

### **Legal Theory or Legal Principles**

The discussion regarding the death of the Sumatran Tiger in Mukomuko Regency is analyzed using the theory of sustainable development and the precautionary principle.

Otto Soemarwoto explained that sustainable development emphasizes a balance between development needs and environmental sustainability. The environment is inseparable from the continuation of human life, so every form of natural resource utilization must take environmental carrying capacity into account. (Otto Soemarwoto, 2004) Therefore, protecting wildlife habitats is an important part of realizing sustainable development.

Furthermore, the precautionary principle places prevention as the primary step in environmental protection. This principle requires that potential environmental damage be prevented as early as possible before it causes broader impacts on the ecosystem.

### Analysis

The death of a Sumatran tiger in Mukomuko Regency demonstrates that wildlife protection still faces various challenges in enforcing environmental law. From an environmental law perspective, the death of a protected animal is not only seen as the loss of a specific species, but also as an indicator of ecosystem disruption due to various factors such as habitat destruction, human-wildlife conflict, and weak environmental oversight.

Research shows that successful environmental protection requires integration between development policies and environmental protection instruments. Strategic Environmental Assessments play a crucial role in ensuring that development takes environmental sustainability and ecosystem preservation into account. (Yanis Rinaldi dan Irvianty, 2021) Thus, protecting the Sumatran Tiger habitat requires not only a repressive approach through law enforcement, but also a preventive approach through integrated environmental policies.

In addition, environmental protection requires effective implementation of laws so that sustainable development goals can be achieved. Research on environmental protection shows that the effectiveness of environmental law is greatly influenced by the implementation of supervision and coordination between institutions in implementing environmental policies. (Fathi Hanif, 2021) Therefore, the case of the death of the Sumatran Tiger in Mukomuko needs to be used as material for evaluating the effectiveness of environmental law enforcement, especially those related to the protection of protected animals and habitat conservation.

### CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that the death of a Sumatran tiger in Mukomuko Regency, Bengkulu, in 2026 demonstrates that the protection of protected animals still faces various problems in the implementation of environmental law enforcement in Indonesia. Normatively, Indonesia already has legal instruments that regulate environmental protection and wildlife conservation through Law Number 32 of 2009 concerning Environmental Protection and Management and Law Number 5 of 1990 concerning the Conservation of Biological Natural Resources and their Ecosystems. However, in its implementation, there is still a gap between the law on the books and the law in action.

The death of the Sumatran tiger should not be viewed solely as the loss of a protected animal, but should also be understood as an indicator of problems in habitat protection and ecosystem balance. Environmental law enforcement cannot be achieved solely through a repressive approach, such as imposing sanctions, but also requires preventive measures, such as strengthening environmental policies, monitoring wildlife habitats, and sustainable conservation efforts. Monitoring of wildlife habitat areas, particularly conservation areas that serve as movement routes for Sumatran tigers in Bengkulu, is crucial. This monitoring needs to be carried out in an integrated manner through inter-agency coordination to ensure more effective protection efforts for protected animals.

Furthermore, strengthening environmental policies based on sustainable development, focusing on habitat protection, preventing environmental damage, and increasing public participation in wildlife conservation efforts, is necessary. Therefore, Sumatran tiger protection will be achieved not only through legal approaches but also through comprehensive ecosystem conservation efforts.

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