Funding Concept:

Conservation Genetics of Banteng: To determine the number of subspecies and the degree of hybridization in Banteng across South-East Asia.

To learn more visit:
www.asianwildcattle.org
Or contact James Burton, Chair of IUCN Asian Wild Cattle Specialist Group:
jburton@earthwatch.org.uk

Rationale:

The Banteng (*Bos javanicus*) is a species of wild cattle found across South-East Asia, and its survival is threatened by many factors that include hunting and habitat loss. Another serious threat to the Banteng is its hybridization with Bali cattle (domestic relative). This hybridization occurs in both wild and conservation breeding populations, but the severity of this is currently unknown. A better understanding of this hybridization is a high priority of IUCN's Regional Conservation Plan for South-east Asian Wild Cattle and Buffalo (shortly to be published).

Hybridization results in the loss of important genetic diversity in populations of wild species. This reduces the ability of the population to adapt to future environmental change. Therefore, it is important to identify pure populations of Banteng that have high genetic diversity. Preserving these pure populations is imperative for the long-term preservation of the Banteng. In addition, the high genetic diversity within Banteng populations may be valuable to improve viability of cattle breeds in future.

There is a need to also clarify the number of Banteng subspecies and the degree to which they vary genetically. This will help direct how best to manage the different Banteng populations. Therefore, the findings will help to answer the questions about Banteng hybridization and the number of subspecies, and so indentify priorities for Banteng conservation.

Project Details:

The proposed duration of the project is 4 years and the end products will include multiple scientific publications and management recommendations for the long-term survival of the Banteng.

A European genetics lab will lead the project. Other partners will include a range of country Government representatives and a range of country zoo community and genetics laboratories. There will also be significant capacity building in genetic research for local scientists.

Cost:

The collection of genetic samples, laboratory analysis, capacity building and reporting will cost 50,000 Euros ($68,000). We are looking for contributions of 500Euros ($679) or more. If you wish to support this project we will happily provide you with a detailed project proposal.