

International Animal Rescue asks please “See the world through their eyes” as orangutan mothers and babies are caught up in Indonesia’s forest fires.

Thursday 1 October, 2026

The theme for this year’s World Animal Day on 4th October is “*See the World Through Their Eyes*”. A theme which has never been more fitting. Imagine carrying your baby to safety while the forest around you burns. Today, for orangutans in Indonesia, that is the very sad reality.

International Animal Rescue, based in Sussex, is calling for support as its Indonesian partner YIARI is caring for over 20 orangutans that they have rescued from fires in West Kalimantan.

International Animal Rescue (IAR) is asking people to consider what the fires mean for the animals living in the forests of West Kalimantan. Its Indonesian partner, Yayasan Inisiasi Alam Rehabilitasi Indonesia (YIARI), has been responding to reports of orangutans stranded by flames, exposed to smoke and driven into plantations as safe habitat and food become harder to find.

Among those rescued are Mama Penja and her baby, which were found weak and severely undernourished on 14 September, Mama Penja had serious burns to both feet, thought to have been caused by walking across burning peat soil. The veterinary team gave her fluids and oxygen before taking the pair to a rescue centre, where she is receiving intensive care.

Another mother, Mama Man, was evacuated with her infant after fires left them isolated with nowhere safe to go. Although she had no visible burns, the team found signs of smoke exposure in her baby.

Gavin Bruce, CEO of International Animal Rescue, said: “*On 4th October 2026, **World Animal Day asks us to see the world through an animal’s eyes.** For a mother orangutan, that world should be the forest where she can find food and keep her baby safe. Instead, our partners YIARI are finding mothers and young surrounded by fire, struggling to breathe and in desperate need of treatment. Tragically, some don’t make it.*”

When flames destroy and fragment the forest, orangutans lose not only their homes, but also access to the food, shelter and safe routes they need to survive. Forced into fields of crops and closer to communities, they face an even greater risk of injury, starvation and conflict with humans. The thick smoke creates further risks to the health of the people and wildlife that live in and around the forests; we have already seen orangutans with severe respiratory conditions.

“Mama Penja’s burned feet show the terrible cost of losing their home. Our teams are doing everything they can to help these animals survive, but they also need forest habitats that they can safely return to.”

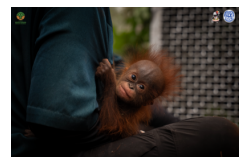
“International Animal Rescue has been working with YIARI for over 20 years, and we are incredibly proud of what we have achieved together. The YIARI team work tirelessly with the authorities and local communities to locate and rescue animals in danger. Protecting the remaining forest and preventing further fires is the immediate priority.”

World Animal Day takes place on 4 October. International Animal Rescue hopes this year’s theme will encourage people to look beyond images of the fires and recognise the individual animals affected, as well as YIARI and the teams working 24/7 to protect them.

If you would find out more, please see here

<https://www.internationalanimalrescue.org/appeal/urgent-fire-crisis-fund>

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