

March 2026

2025 Update: Conserving the Maleo and other threatened species in Sulawesi

Field partner: the Alliance for Tompotika Conservation (AITo)

We wanted to thank you for your support for this project and let you know what was accomplished in 2025 — a lot as it turns out!



Here are the 2025 highlights:

- ◆ **Maleo numbers at the large Libuun site continue very strong.** AITo continued to experiment with solutions (snares and better fencing) to the problem of dog and cat predation/disturbance on eggs and chicks at the nesting ground. AITo's annual meeting with Taima village, AITo's partner for this site, was well-attended and showed strong support within the village for the ongoing partnership.
- ◆ **Ground-breaking research:**
 - The first range-wide assessment of the Maleo's status (spearheaded by AITo's Marcy Summers) [was published](#) in a leading ornithology journal. The paper documents the drastic range-wide decline of the Maleo in recent decades, but also the dramatic recoveries that have taken place in Tompotika. It spotlights ending egg-taking as key to the survival of the Maleo.
 - Camera traps documented a wide range of rare Sulawesi wildlife.
 - A new species, the Mount Tompotika Spiny Rat, *Crunomys tompotika* was described.
- ◆ **Increased capacity to avert impacts from mining:** While outreach to villages around mining and forests continues under the leadership of AITo's Mining Outreach Manager, AITo added a full-time lawyer and part-time paralegal to advise and represent us in legal matters, mostly pertaining to mining. They will train local villagers in their legal rights with respect to mining and build relationships with other parties involved in mining issues.
- ◆ **New formal forest protection:** AITo's application, along with Sampaka Village, for Hutan Desa ("Village Forest") protection status of a 4,018-ha area of forest was approved.
- ◆ **Four hawksbill turtle nests** (a Critically Endangered species) were among the 63 nests in the sea turtle program, which released 4,625 live hatchlings (71.5% hatchling rate).

Looking ahead: On World Maleo Day, 21 November 2026, we celebrate 20 years of the AITo-villager partnership protecting the Libuun Maleo nesting ground. During that time, Maleo numbers have increased 7-fold. Villages of Tompotika will be celebrating the Maleo with music, games, art, and drama, and raising awareness about what's at stake.

Thank you for your support for this project! Please let us know if you have questions or would like to discuss this project or receive further information.

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