



Protecting the Great Forests of
Papua New Guinea



POSTCARDS

FROM THE

FIELD

GALA 2020



PHOTO: ELODIE VAN LIERDE

WCS is the longest established international conservation organization operating within Papua New Guinea. Over forty years ago we began our work in what was to become the Crater Mountain Wildlife Management Area. Today we work in three major geographic locations: Manus Island, New Ireland, and the Bismarck Forest Corridor.





PHOTO: ELODIE VAN LIERDE

Papua New Guinea contains some of the world's last remaining intact forests—life-giving biodiversity strongholds that also support livelihoods for local communities. These forests, the world largest remaining rainforests outside the Congo and Amazon, are under threat from road expansion, commercial logging and subsistence and commercial agriculture.





PHOTO: ELODIE VAN LIERDE

WCS is working at the national policy level and the local level to reduce the negative social and environmental impacts of large-scale infrastructure and logging projects and promote sustainable use of natural resources.





PHOTO: ELODIE VAN LIERDE

Papua New Guinea is a large tropical country rich in biodiversity, potentially containing around 7% of global species in less than 1% of the global land area. The Admiralty cuscus featured in this photo is a nocturnal cat-sized marsupial only found in Manus island, where WCS is working with indigenous communities to protect its habitat.





PHOTO: ELODIE VAN LIERDE

WCS has uncovered 102 new and undescribed species through our biodiversity surveys of the Hindenburg Wall, Manus and Mussau Islands.





PHOTO: KEN APLIN

Leaf-nosed bat (*Hipposideros sp.*) is one of the new species discovered during WCS biodiversity surveys. Several small colonies of this species were located in caves formed in the low limestone cliffs in Mussau island.





PHOTO: FANIE VENTER

Gecko (*Gehyra sp.*). This giant gecko has a body length of at least 14 cm. This new species discovered during WCS biodiversity surveys is thought to be known only on Mussau and Manus islands.





PHOTO: ELODIE VAN LIERDE

Papua New Guinea's seas are in the global center for coral reef biodiversity and harbor more than 20 species of marine mammals, including the spinner dolphins in this photo, and 130 species of sharks and rays.





PHOTO: ELODIE VAN LIERDE

Papua New Guinea is also the most linguistically and culturally diverse nation on earth, with over 800 recognized languages and more than 1000 cultural groups, including the Baining tribe, some of whose members are featured in this photo.





PHOTO: ELODIE VAN LIERDE

As virtually all land in Papua New Guinea is under customary ownership, conservation in the country means working closely with the indigenous landowners. Our approach focuses on finding participatory sustainable solutions which safeguard local communities, their natural resources, and their country's biodiversity.





PHOTO: ELODIE VAN LIERDE

Papua New Guinea retains large areas of intact rainforest and iconic wildlife such as birds of paradise (including the brown sicklebill featured in this photo), giant flightless cassowaries, tree kangaroos, and enigmatic egg-laying long-beaked echidnas. WCS is working with many indigenous communities in several Key Biodiversity Areas to strengthen the protection of their forested land.





PHOTO: ELODIE VAN LIERDE

WCS is working with more than 100 indigenous communities to improve the sustainable management of their marine resources.





PHOTO: ELODIE VAN LIERDE

WCS is helping communities adapt to climate change through better planning and awareness, mangrove conservation and plantation, and introducing climate smart agriculture practices.





PHOTO: ELODIE VAN LIERDE

WCS is trialing conservation compatible cash crops (such as vanilla) as a means by which communities can earn a livelihood without sacrificing their environment.





PHOTO: ELODIE VAN LIERDE

WCS is supporting communities to develop nurseries and plant native woodlots as a part of a long-term plan to alleviate dependence on vulnerable forests.

