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Karmeles Llano Sanchez

Director of IAR (International Animal Rescue) Indonesia

Born in Bilbao on 1978. She is a veterinarian who, after completing her degree in León, obtained a Master's degree in Veterinary Conservation Medicine from Murdoch University in Australia and is currently continuing her studies for a Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine at the Free University, Berlin. In 2000, she worked as a volunteer at a wildlife rescue center in Venezuela. In 2002, she was awarded a Socrates Scholarship, and worked in a primate rescue center in the Netherlands. In 2003, she volunteered in Indonesia, where she worked in several wildlife rescue and recovery centers. In 2006, she initiated a primate recovery project in Indonesia, and thus created IAR Indonesia Foundation, where she has been working since then as director. Karmeles carries out several conservation and biodiversity protection projects, including the rescue and recovery of orangutans in Kalimantan (the Indonesian part of Borneo). BBVA Foundation World Biodiversity Conservation Award winner.

The Orangutan, or the "Human of the Forest", has lost much of its habitat, in the forests of Borneo and Sumatra. Karmeles tells us about her experience of more than 17 years rescuing and recovering orangutans to return them to their habitat.

Between 1999 and 2015, more than 100,000 Bornean orangutans disappeared due to habitat loss and fragmentation, poaching and illegal wildlife trade. If this decline is not halted, it is estimated that by 2025, 82% of their population will be extinct. International Animal Rescue (IAR) aims to prevent the disappearance of both these great apes and other species unique to Borneo, such as the long-nosed monkey and the clouded panther, through a conservation program in Bukit Baka Bukit Raya National Park, a 200,000 hectare area of tropical forest of the highest conservation value located in the area known as "the heart of Borneo".

Karmeles is a [BBVA Foundation World Biodiversity Conservation Award winner](#) for her work on orangutan recovery in Borneo. She is the leader of IAR Indonesia, an organization dedicated to the conservation of orangutans and other endangered species where more than 270 people work today. She has managed to reintroduce more than 50 rescued orangutans together with her team. In addition, this organization has created a program to support the healthcare, education and employment of local indigenous communities to halt the deterioration of the ecosystem in Borneo on which these great apes depend.