



▲ **Figure 2.104** Danum Valley Conservation Area

The Danum Valley Conservation Area (DVCA) contains more than 120 mammal species, including 10 species of primate. The DVCA and surrounding forest is an important reservation for orang-utans. These forests are particularly rich in other large mammals including the Asian elephant, Malayan sun bear, clouded leopard, bearded pig and several species of deer. The area also provides one of the last refuges in Sabah for the critically endangered Sumatran rhino. Over 340 species of bird have been recorded at Danum, including the argus pheasant, Bulwer's pheasant and seven species of pitta bird.

The DVCA covers 43,800 hectares, comprising almost entirely lowland dipterocarp forest (dipterocarps are valuable hardwood trees). It is the largest expanse of pristine forest of this type remaining in Sabah, northeast Borneo (Figure 2.104).

Until the late 1980s, the area was under threat from commercial logging. The establishment of a long-term research programme between Yayasan Sabah and the Royal Society in the UK created local awareness of the conservation value of the area and provided important scientific information about the forest and what happens to it when it is disturbed through logging. Danum Valley is controlled by a management committee containing all the relevant local institutions — wildlife, forestry and

commercial sectors are all represented. To the east of the DVCA is the 30,000 hectare Innoprise-FACE Foundation Rainforest Rehabilitation Project (INFAPRO), one of the largest forest rehabilitation projects in southeast Asia, which is replanting areas of heavily disturbed logged forest.

Because all areas of conservation and replanting are embedded within the larger commercial forest, the value of the whole area is greatly enhanced. Movement of animals between forest areas is enabled and allows the continued survival of some important and endangered Borneo animals such as the Sumatran rhino, the orang-utan and the Borneo elephant. In the late 1990s, a hotel was established on the northeastern edge of the DVCA. It has established flourishing ecotourism in the area and exposed this unique forest to a wider range of visitors than was previously possible. As well as raising revenue for the local area, it has raised the international profile of the area as an important centre for conservation and research.

Case study analysis

- 1 What was the main threat to the Danum Valley before the late 1980s?
- 2 Why is the DVCA important for the conservation of species?
- 3 What are the main interest groups in the forest?