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Forum and Expert Workshop on Forest Landscape

This monthly news bulletin is produced by Sarawak Timber Association (STA) to disseminate information to our counterparts on training, research and other relevant areas.

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Photo (top): Participants of the Expert Workshop, which included experts from wide range of background discussing and exchanging their viewpoints, (bottom) Datuk Amar Abang Haji Abdul Rahman Zohari bin Tun Datuk Abang Haji Openg, the Chief Minister of Sarawak, officiating the Forum.

The Forum on Forest Landscape, with the theme *Enhancing Multi-functionality of Forest Landscape Restoration in Sarawak* was organised by the Ministry of Resource Planning and Environment (MRPE), in collaboration with Forest Department Sarawak (FDS), Sarawak Forestry Corporation (SFC), Sarawak Timber Industry Development Corporation (STIDC), Harwood Timber Sdn Bhd, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) and Sarawak Timber Association (STA) on 7 and 8 March 2017 at the Riverside Majestic hotel, Kuching.

The two-day Forum attracted more than 170 participants from Sarawak, Sabah and Peninsular Malaysia representing various Government agencies, Non-

Governmental Organisations, the private sector and stakeholders.

Datu Sudarsono Osman, Permanent Secretary of MRPE who is also the Forum's Chairman, in his welcoming speech mentioned that the Forum will act as a platform for the State to come up with a strategic action plan and policy that will ensure successful restoration of permanent forest estates and rehabilitation of Totally Protected Areas.

Sarawak is guided by the Sarawak Forest Policy Statement of 1954 which articulates the need to manage

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the state's forest resources sustainably to meet the needs of the present and future generations while ensuring the protection of the environment.

He believes with the commitment and dedication from agencies such as FDS, SFC and STIDC as well as industry players and stakeholders, the State can be successful in its endeavour. A total of eight (8) papers were presented at the Forum. They included papers by Dr Scott Perkin from the International Union for Conservation of Nature, Thailand and Dr Satrio Wicaksono from the World Resource Institute, Indonesia.

The Forum is followed by a two-day Expert Workshop, moderated by Dr Riina Jalonen of Bioversity International. that deliberated on the results from the Forum and drafted The forum deliberated on strategy for forest and landscape restoration planning for Sarawak.

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Annual Technical Meeting of Planted Forest Research Program



Photo: Participants listening to briefing given by SFC personnel during field visit.

An Annual Technical Meeting of Planted Forest Research Programme (PFRP) was called by SARAWAK FORESTRY Corporation Sdn Bhd (SFC) on 21 March 2017 at Imperial Hotel, Miri.

Approximately sixty (60) representatives from the Ministry of Resource Planning and Environment (MRPE), Forestry Agencies, Licence for Planted Forests (LPF) companies, local and international research institutes as well as STA Secretariat attended the Meeting.

Mr Wong Ting Chung, Chief Executive Officer of SFC in his welcoming remarks informed participants of the Meeting that the PFRP has made some substantial progress since the commencement of the project earlier last year. Among the progress achieved is the establishment of various planting trials in the LPFs, i.e. silvicultural trials, progeny trials and seed source trials, of which the preliminary findings will be presented during the meeting.

He added that in order to achieve the targeted goals of the PFRP, there is a need to enlist experts from both local and international research institutions that had proven good track records of similar Research and Development (R&D) programmes. In this connection, SFC is engaging the Borneo Forestry Cooperative (BFC) to increase their research capacity in areas of common interests such as the development of best operating practices for plantation establishment and the improvement of seed quality.

The Meeting was officiated by Datu Haji Len Talif Salleh, Assistant Minister of Environment cum Assistant Minister of Workforce Development and Training. In his opening remarks, he mentioned that the State Government is progressively reducing the log production from the natural forests and the log exports from the natural forests may

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Did you know that.....

An in-depth study, "Impacts and Effectiveness of Logging Bans in Natural Forests in Asia Pacific" conducted by the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission in six countries (namely China, New Zealand, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam) has revealed that inconsistent implementation of logging bans have led to many unintended negative impacts such as job losses and reduced government revenue. In some countries, deforestation rates rose, instead of decrease as the bans reduces the financial value of forests.

Source: <http://www.un-redd.org/single-post/2017/03/31/Contemplating-the-impacts-and-effectiveness-of-logging-bans>

Did you also know that....

More than 1.4 billion people, or 42 percent of the world's total active workforce are heavily water dependent. In agriculture-dominant Asia, the effects of rising populations coupled with growing prosperity are placing unsustainable pressure on resources, particularly water resources. A significant decline in available quality and quantity of fresh water is anticipated to bring about water crisis, as reported in World Economic Forum's Global Risks Report 2016.

Source: <http://reliefweb.int/report/world/asia-s-water-politics-near-boiling-point>



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be banned in five (5) years' time. The declining in royalty collection from natural forests is of no concern as the State Government will look for revenue from other alternative sources. Therefore, he urged the LPF companies to be seriously involved in the planted forests industry as most of the needs of the local timber industries will come from forest plantations in the future.

He also stressed on the importance of a sustainable and coordinated R&D programme in establishing the productive planted forests. He called for the parties involved in the planted forests industry to be proactive and collaborative in ensuring success and continuity of PFRP through sharing of R&D data and findings as well as provision of sustainable funding from Sarawak Timber Association (STA).

In terms of importation of planting materials into Sarawak, proper control and preventive measures will need to be taken by the State Government agencies and industry to prevent the spread of pests and diseases from other countries or regions into the plantations in Sarawak. This can be achieved through the enforcement of phytosanitary regulations as well as the Forests (Nursery) Rules which will be implemented soon.

Datu Len then witnessed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between SFC and BFC.

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Meeting on High Conservation Value

WWF-Malaysia has recognised that there is a need to develop a High Conservation Value (HCV) module in identification, management and monitoring of HCV sites in both the natural forests and plantations for the use by practitioners especially those undergoing the forest management certification.

Therefore, a meeting was called by WWF-Malaysia on 17 March 2017 at Bangunan Binamas, Kuching to develop the HCV training module.

Among the main objectives are;

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The Meeting was divided into five (5) sessions in which a total of seventeen (17) papers were presented by both local and international practitioners and experts as well as researchers from local plantation industry. Various topics were covered, amongst others, the importance of plantation R&D, site characteristics and tree growth, genetic improvement, silviculture practises, pests and diseases, data management, utilisation of planted trees and etc. Progress of PFRP and its preliminary outcomes were also shared during the Meeting.

A field visit was subsequently organised by SFC on 22 March 2017 to LPF0017 Kejin Plantation under Shin Yang Forestry Sdn Bhd at Long Lama, Miri.

During the visit, the group was briefed on the various trial plots established under PFRP at LPF0017, which included fertiliser trial, taxa/seed source trials and progeny trial for species like Eucalyptus pellita, Acacia mangium and Falcataria moluccana.

The group also discussed on the establishment of the seed production area (SPA) from the current stand and the methodology on setting up the sample plots for stand inventory.

(1) to develop a best-suited and field-tested HCV training module for the use of forest management units, government agencies and other relevant interested stakeholders of HCV practice for Sarawak; and
(2) to build and improve the awareness of forest managers as well as key personnel of the forest management areas, of the procedures for assessing, managing and monitoring of HCVs.

Dr Yap Son Kheong has been engaged as the consultant who will also function as the facilitator, master trainer and main contact person in coordinating this training module.



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Forum on Electricity Access for Indigenous Communities in Sarawak

Sarawak Development Institute (SDI) together with the Institute of Social Informatics and Technological Innovations (ISITI) of Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) in collaboration with Smart Villages have organised a Forum on Electricity Access for Indigenous Communities in Sarawak on 14 March 2017 at Wisma Bapa Malaysia, Kuching.

Smart Villages is a community based initiative primarily aimed to access sustainable energy services for the development of worldwide communities. This includes provision of good education and healthcare, access to clean water, sanitation and nutrition, growth of productive enterprises to boost incomes, enhanced security, gender equality and democratic engagement.

The Forum was chaired by Ms Lelia Sim Ah Hua, Acting Chief Executive Officer of SDI. In her opening speech, she welcomed and thanked all representatives from government agencies, private sectors and media for attending the Forum.

She explained that the aim of this Forum is to explore the social and institutional changes for providing electricity services to indigenous communities in Sarawak.

The Forum discussed on the research undertaken by UNIMAS and University of Cambridge and its findings focussing on understanding the preferences of community to ensure that electrification schemes are congruent with the communities' specific development pathways.

Several options of electrification schemes have been tested throughout the study. The outcome showed that there was a strong preference for a community-based operator model over a utility-based model. The study found that the preference for that model among the villagers is related to the experience of using electricity for income generation purposes.

Therefore, the speakers of the Forum highlighted that stakeholders will need to invest time and resources as well as to engage with the communities to overcome the challenges in providing electricity to their areas.