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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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The 18th Malaysian Forestry Conference 2018



Photo: The Chief Minister of Sarawak flanked by other guests of honour and representatives of Forest Management Units (FMUs) who are present to receive their SFM Certificates.

The 18th Malaysian Forestry Conference (MFC) themed "Advancing Sustainable Forestry through Digitalization and Technology" was organised by Forest Department Sarawak (FDS) in partnership with Sarawak Forestry Corporation Sdn Bhd (SFCBSB) from 31 July to 2 August 2018 at Imperial Hotel, Kuching.

The Conference was officiated by Datuk Patinggi (Dr) Abang Haji Abdul Rahman Zohari Bin Tun Datuk Abang Haji Openg, the Chief Minister of Sarawak and attended by more than 600 participants comprising representatives from government and non-governmental agencies as well as research and academic institutions in the forestry sector. The Conference, hosted in each region of Malaysia on a triennial rotation by the Forestry Departments of Sarawak, Sabah and Peninsular Malaysia has provided a forum for Malaysian foresters to

exchange and share information, views and experiences in the administration, management and development of the nation's forest resources, at the same time establish closer working relationships and understanding among foresters from all over Malaysia.

In his opening speech, the Chief Minister highlighted that forestry has contributed significantly to the State's economy and the livelihood of its people and the State Government is committed to continue managing its forest and forest resources in a sustainable manner by subscribing to the concept of sustainable development. In order to achieve sustainable development, the State needs to re-look into its policies and ordinances to strengthen forest management and the timber industry.

Among the policies that are being reviewed, newly introduced and at

(Continue on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

final stage of deliberation prior to being endorsed are Sarawak Forest Policy, forest management certification, development of planted or industrial forest, wood industries development plan, raw material for timber industries and forest revenue especially cess from downstream products. The Chief Minister pointed out that interest in research on digital technologies in the field of forestry is vital to maximise the timber industry's growth while assuring sustainability.

During the opening ceremony, the participants witnessed a presentation of Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) Certificates by the Chief Minister to forest management unit (FMU) holders i.e. Anap Muput FMU for being able to maintain its certification as well as Ravenscourt FMU and Kapit FMU for being certified recently. This was followed by the launching of "Sarawak Logs Tracking and Forest Revenue System (REVLOG)" mobile application.

Twenty four (24) papers were presented throughout the 3-day Conference and provided participants of the Conference with insights into forestry related topics:

Session 1: Forest Governance: Policy, Legislation and Enforcement

- Forest Policies should be widely accepted and applied to ensure their long-term relevance. Legislation is to be periodically reviewed by relevant authorities to control forest offences and ensure effectiveness in forest management.

Session 2: Sustainable Forest Management: Technology, Innovation and Practices

- An adequate level of skilled manpower and capacity building with continuous effort in education and awareness are needed in managing forest resources in addition to using the latest and appropriate technologies. Sufficient financial support is vital to maintain the conduct of intensified Research and Development (R&D) and forest management certification.

Session 3: Forest Biodiversity: Conservation, Restoration, Rehabilitation and Protection

- Forest biodiversity could be protected and preserved and degraded forest areas could be restored if species

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of flora and fauna, in particular endangered species are conserved through activities by relevant authorities to the public. For example, government agencies can play their part by adopting landscape approach in conservation and eco-tourism planning in addition to performing assessments and documentations of flora and fauna.

Session 4: Plantation Forestry/Industrial Forest: Sustainable Wood Production and Wood Based Industry

- R&D is extremely crucial in forest plantation as it could enhance the rate of plantation establishment. Sharing of R&D findings and germplasms are among some of the factors that could boost the rate. Other alternatives are using technologies and innovations in nurseries as well as intensifying the establishment of downstream processing.

Session 5: Forest Ecosystem Services: Food, Water, Energy, Climate and Recreation, PES & REDD+

- The most important purposes of forest restoration and rehabilitation are to improve wildlife habitats and mitigate climate change. Besides that, effective approaches for forest quality monitoring and the establishment of forest parks in urban environment can also contribute to a favourable forest ecosystem services. Involvement of stakeholder in participation and exploring the mechanism for Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) ensure prolonged and quality forest ecosystem that benefits all.

Session 6: Forest Beyond Timber: Social Forestry, Ecotourism, Education Programmes, Non Timber Forest Products (NTFPs)

- In managing social forestry, participation in social programmes such as partnership with local communities in forest monitoring and ecotourism are crucial to improve the livelihood of the community.

In conjunction with the Conference, various activities such as exhibition, poster presentations and sports were also held. Field excursions to Semenggoh Wildlife Centre and Kuching Wetland National Park (KWNP) (Ramsar Site) were conducted on 3 August 2018 where a total of 100 mangrove plants were successfully planted.



Did you know that.....

Since 1990, a total of around 20,000 ha or about 3% of the mangrove forest in Malaysia were lost due to factors such as conversion to other land uses, coastal erosion and pollution. The Forest Research Institute of Malaysia (FRIM) reported that Sabah has some 61% of the total area of mangroves in Malaysia which extend over around 630,000 ha. Sarawak has 22% of the total area with the balance being in Peninsular Malaysia.

Source: The ITTO Tropical Timber Market Report, Volume 22 Number 10. Available at: https://www.itto.int/files/user/mis/MIS_16-31_May2018.pdf

Did you also know that....

You can now calibrate the impact for using FSC-certified versus uncertified timber by using a new calculator brought about from collaboration between FSC Netherlands and Ernst & Young (EY). The online FSC Impact Calculator requires the user to input the timber species and produces the requested value in € per m³. This value indicates net CO₂ emissions and the potential loss of biodiversity, or rather the avoided loss of biodiversity given that FSC-certified timber was harvested.

Source: *Calculating the Environmental Impact of Uncertified Timber*. Available at: <https://globaltimbertrackingnetwork.org/2018/02/12/calculating-the-environmental-impact-of-uncertified-timber/>



Briefing on Trained Workmen

A meeting was called by Forest Department Sarawak (FDS) to discuss matters related to the training of workmen under Section 51(1) of the Forests Ordinance 2015 (Sarawak Cap 71) on 30 August 2018 and was attended by twenty (20) attendees comprising Head of Divisions, Officers, Forest Rangers and Database Registry personnel from FDS as well as representatives from STA Training Sdn Bhd (STAT) and Sarawak Forestry Corporation Sdn Bhd (SFC).

The Meeting was chaired by Mr Oscar Johin Ngayop, Assistant Director (Licensing Division) of FDS and discussed matters such as briefing on training of Workmen by STAT as a Training Provider as well as inspection and verification of Trained Workmen by SFC as a Training Agent.

Dr Peter Kho, General Manager of Sarawak Timber Association (STA) cum Manager of STAT briefed the participants of the Meeting on the background of training which dates back to 1990s when the International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO) recommended for the State to look into strengthening and up skilling both the forestry workers and officers in the State. He also presented information on the Sarawak Modular Training Framework (SMTF), which was developed with the help of the then Forests Industry Training Education Council (FITEC) of New Zealand, in consultation with representatives from FDS, SFC as well as members of STA in the 2000s for the implementation of the then Section 54B of the Forests Ordinance 1958 (Sarawak Cap 126), which is now Section 51(1) of the Forests Ordinance 2015 (Sarawak Cap 71).

The key elements of the SMTF includes (i) Ownership by all direct industry stakeholders; (ii) Enhance regulation in Training Policy i.e. roles of all government stakeholders; (iii) sustainable funding model; (iv) Phased approach to be used; and (v) Establish simple and efficient administrative system.

In addition, the three (3) Advisory Committees namely (i) Trainer/Assessor Advisory Committee; (ii) Programme Development Advisory Committee; and (iii) Quality Moderation Advisory Committee as proposed by the

consultants must be formed to revise the current unit standards and assessment documents used in the training as well as to develop new courses. Any delay in setting up these Committees may hinder the certification process for the *STLVS Standard for Verification of Forest Management, Mill Operations, Trade & Customs and the Malaysian Criteria and Indicators for Forest Management Certification (Natural Forest) / Malaysian Criteria and Indicators for Forest Plantation Management Certification*.

The presentation by Dr Peter Kho also covered the roles and responsibilities of a Training Provider i.e. (i) conduct and arrange training(s) as well as assessment(s) in the five (5) prescribed forestry activities (PFA) that is; *Certificate in Tree Felling; Certificate in Log Extraction; Certificate in Log Loading; Certificate in Clear-fell Site Preparation; and Certificate in Mechanical Site Preparation*; (ii) issuance of certificate i.e. Trained Workmen Certificate to a workman who has been assessed competent in the PFA skills as specified in the First Schedule of the Forests (Trained Workmen) Rules, 2015; and (iii) maintaining database on training and assessment of all registered workmen as well as the current status of training.

Ms Shirley Lyn Michael Gias, Forest Industry Training Manager of SFC, the Agent appointed by the Director of Forests also delivered a presentation on (i) Roles as Training Agent; (ii) Requirements for Training Provider, Employer and Workmen; (iii) Documents for Monitoring of Compliance; (iv) Capacity Building; (v) Inspection and Verification Exercise; and (vi) Issues and Challenges.



Photo: Briefing in session

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1st Workshop for Forestry and Timber Industry Master Plan for Sarawak



Photo: Workshop attendees paying attention to the presentation

The State Government through Sarawak Timber Industry Development Corporation (STIDC) has engaged Margules Groome Consulting Pty Ltd (MG), an international specialist forest industry consulting firm to conduct a study on Forestry and Timber Industry Master Plan for the State of Sarawak.

Among the objectives of the study are to determine the future direction of the forestry and timber industry in Sarawak for the next 20 years, transform Sarawak timber industry structure from primary based industry to a high income (value added processing) industry and recommend favourable policies to implement the master plan.

MG had presented its findings in the *1st Workshop for Forestry and Timber Industry Master Plan for Sarawak* held on 7 August 2018 at Hilton Kuching which comprised of two (2) parts - presentation of findings and observations as well as breakout sessions.

The presentation from the stakeholder interviews and research encompasses three (3) sections, namely Resource; Governance; and Manufacturing & Marketing while the 3 concurrent breakout sessions were structured into the 3 sections to establish an alignment and agreement on the directional settings for the Master Plan.

In his opening remarks, Tuan Haji Hashim bin Haji Bojet, Acting General Manager of STIDC said that the study by MG to develop a Master Plan for Sarawak shall address the availability of raw materials for the next five to ten years by developing the forestry and timber industry based on the potential from the planted forests. This may require some technological change as different machineries will be required for processing smaller logs from planted forests, as the machineries currently used are meant for bigger logs from the natural forests. He hoped that the Master Plan would enable both the government and the private sector to work hand in hand for the industry to progress.