



KEMENTERIAN SUMBER ASLI, ALAM SEKITAR
DAN PERUBAHAN IKLIM

PRESS STATEMENT

MALAYSIA'S COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT

The Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and Climate Change (NRECC) notes the recent release of a report entitled the “*State of Malaysian Rainforest 2023*” by RimbaWatch. We appreciate efforts by civil society to increase awareness on the issue of forest loss. However, we also note that the findings (as acknowledged in page 51 of the document), are estimations, and we are unable to respond on the findings without fully reviewing and verifying the study.

Forest conservation is a core part of achieving Malaysia's commitment to Sustainable Forest Management (SFM). The United Nations Global Forest Resource Assessment Report 2020 listed Malaysia as one of the countries recognised as a High Forest, Low Deforestation country amongst 25 other developing countries.

NRECC and its agencies are continuously taking proactive measures to strengthen forestry management including:

- a. Identifying and increasing Permanent Forest Reserves (PRF). For example, currently, NRECC is in the final stages of processing the gazettelement of the first PRF in Federal Territory of Labuan;
- b. Increasing allocations for Ecological Fiscal Transfer (EFT) for biodiversity conservation in 2023 to RM150 million, a 150% increase since its implementation in 2019;
- c. Implementing the various strategies under the Malaysia Policy on Forestry (MPF);
- d. Charging offenders of 90 cases of illegal logging under the National Forestry Act 1984 in Peninsular Malaysia, the Forest Ordinance 2015 in Sarawak and the Sabah Forest Enactment 1968;
- e. Not issuing Operating Mining Scheme (OMS) for mining activities in PRFs or Protected Areas and other Environmental Sensitive Areas (ESA);
- f. Setting a moratorium for new forest plantations within PRFs;

- g. Using the Forest Monitoring Using Remote Sensing system (FMRS) in the Peninsula and the Continuous Monitoring of Surveillance (COMOS) system in Sarawak and the iForSabah application in Sabah equipped with Geographic Information System (GIS) technology and high-resolution satellite images to detect any changes in permanent forest reserves;
- h. Empowering indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) via the Social Forestry Strategic Plan of Malaysia 2021-2025, rehabilitation of coastal areas, employment of community rangers, establishing nurseries, ecotourism, and recreational parks.

These efforts require a cohesive multi-stakeholder collaboration, therefore we welcome and value the continuous feedback of civil society, academia, the private sector, state governments and the general public in fine-tuning as well as improving the outcomes of our work.

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