



MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND  
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

## **SPEECH**

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**MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND  
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**

**FOR**

**THE FORGOTTEN STRIPES: TAPIR LAUNCH AND EXHIBITION**

**12 FEBRUARY 2025 (WEDNESDAY)**

**INTI INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE, SUBANG**

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh, good afternoon and Salam Malaysia Madani.

**1. Dr. Chong Kok Wai**

CEO of INTI International University and Colleges

**2. Yang Berbahagia Dato' Abdul Kadir Abu Hashim**

Director-General, PERHILITAN Malaysia

**3. Mr. Herman Bernard Ganapathy**

Assistant Curator, Zoology Department, Zoo Negara

**4. Ms Rozzana Ahmad Basri**

Director of Communication and Marketing, WWF Malaysia

Ladies and gentlemen,

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. It is truly a privilege to stand here today, surrounded by passionate individuals who share a deep commitment to protecting Malaysia's incredible biodiversity. Today, we are not just celebrating an achievement—we are celebrating a movement. A movement led by young, determined changemakers who refuse to let our wildlife fade into history.
2. First and foremost, congratulations to Team Snouts and Stripes—Aida Sofea, Nur Sarah, and Sheryl Neha from INTI International College, Subang for winning the WWF Eco-Champion Award 2024!

This is a well-earned recognition of your hard work and dedication in advocating for one of Malaysia's most unique yet endangered species—the Malayan Tapir. Your commitment to conservation is the kind of leadership we need to shape a more sustainable future.

3. When we think of endangered species in Malaysia, our minds often go straight to the Malayan tiger or the Malayan gaur (Seladang) and the Orangutan—and rightly so, as these species are fighting for survival. But let's not forget that many other incredible creatures, including the Malayan Tapir, also face threats.
4. The Malayan Tapir or its scientific name *Tapirus indicus* is the largest Tapir species in the world and plays an important role as a seed disperser in the tropical forest ecosystem. The Malayan Tapir is one of the iconic species in Malaysia that is fully protected under the Wildlife Conservation Act 2010 [Act 716]. The Malayan Tapir is an endangered species in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and the Redlist of Mammals for Peninsular Malaysia 2017. If we do not act now, we may wake up one day to find that this extraordinary species has disappeared forever.
5. The Malayan Tapir population is increasingly threatened due to the loss and fragmentation of wildlife habitat due to the construction of highways and roads that cross forested areas. Based on records by the Department of Wildlife and National Parks Peninsular Malaysia (PERHILITAN), from 2020 to March 2024, a total of 112 Malayan Tapirs have been killed by road traffic on federal roads, state roads and highways.

6. To reduce roadkill cases, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Sustainability through PERHILITAN is continuously strengthening habitat protection and ecological corridors by building viaducts in the Sungai Deka Ecological Corridor, Terengganu, Sungai Yu Ecological Corridor and Gerik Ecological Corridor, Perak and installing wildlife crossing signs as well as transverse bars and solar amber lights. Equally important are awareness campaigns such as the occasion today to remind the general masses and road users alike to always drive carefully in areas that are wildlife crossings and establishing a special team at the State Government level to address human-wildlife conflict issues.
7. This is why your efforts matter, Team Snouts and Stripes. You are bringing the Malayan Tapir into the spotlight, reminding us that its survival is just as important as any other species fighting against extinction. Your work is not just inspiring—it is necessary.
8. And while today is a moment to celebrate, it is also a reminder that conservation is not the job of a few—it is the responsibility of all of us.
9. I am encouraged to see that awareness about wildlife conservation in Malaysia is growing. More people are realising that our forests, our rivers, and our incredible wildlife are part of our national identity. This effort by the society at large speaks loud and is well heard by the Government in complementing conservation programmes and activities thus far.

10. One of the biggest steps forward has been the establishment of Malaysia's first Tapir conservation centre by PERHILITAN, at the Wildlife Conservation Centre in Sungai Dusun, Selangor. PERHILITAN continues to strengthen the conservation programme for this species through the establishment of another Tapir conservation centre in Kenaboi, Negeri Sembilan by 2027.
11. Binding this effort is the formulation of the Malayan Tapir Conservation Action Plan (MaTCAP); an important plan as part of efforts to conserve and manage the Malayan Tapir population in Malaysia in line with the National Biodiversity Policy 2022-2030. MaTCAP is formulated by the Government and relevant stakeholders aiming at strengthening Malayan tapir conservation, has four main strategies, 16 outcomes and 49 activities to achieve the vision and objective of strengthening the conservation of the Malayan Tapir within 10 years. This, too, needs your invaluable support towards achieving its overarching objectives.
12. Apart from this, the Government through NRES launched the Biodiversity Protection and Patrolling Programme (BP3) in 2020 which aims to combat forest encroachment, illegal logging and wildlife poaching. The programme has shown positive outcomes in improving protected area management and combating wildlife poaching, while at the same time enhancing the livelihood of indigenous peoples and local communities.
13. The Government has also introduced the Ecological Fiscal Transfer for Biodiversity Conservation (EFT) to incentivise state governments to protect and increase coverage of protected areas.

The federal government has allocated a total of RM350 million for EFT from 2019 to 2023. The allocated funds for these incentives were increased to RM200 million in 2024 and RM250 million in 2025.

14. But the real question is: What can we do? We can support conservation programmes. We can push for stronger policies. We can educate those around us. But above all, we can care enough to take action. Every small effort adds up, and if we all play our part, we can create real change.
15. Let us also take this moment to mark World Tapir Day on April 27th—a day to remind us why this fight is important. Let's make sure that when we talk about Malaysia's wildlife, the Malayan Tapir is not forgotten.

## CONCLUSION

16. Before I end, I want to once again extend my congratulations to Team Snouts and Stripes and your dedicated lecturer, Ms. Uma Muthusamy, for this incredible achievement. Your work is making a difference, and I hope this is just the beginning of an even bigger movement. Together, we can create a future where Malaysia's wildlife thrives.