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SIARAN MEDIA

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YAYASAN SABAH GROUP REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT TOWARDS FOREST RESEARCH

KOTA KINABALU (Friday) – In reinforcing its commitment towards impactful forest research, Yayasan Sabah Group signed the eighth-quinquennial Memorandum of Understanding (Renewal) with the South East Asia Rainforest Research Partnership (SEARRP) on Danum Valley Rainforest Research and Training Programme on 28 July 2023 at the Sabah International Convention Centre.

Signing on behalf of Yayasan Sabah Group was the Director of Yayasan Sabah, Dato' Sri Haji Gulamhaidar @ Yusof bin Khan Bahadar and witnessed by Yayasan Sabah Corporate Secretary, Encik Hanafiah Diman. The Danum Valley Management Committee (DVMC) was represented by its Chairman cum Chief Conservator of Forests, Datuk Frederick Kugan and witnessed by the Group Manager of Conservation and Environmental Management Division of Yayasan Sabah Group cum Secretary of DVMC, Dr. Waidi Sinun, while SEARRP was represented by its Director, Datuk Dr. Glen Reynolds and witnessed by the SEARRP Board of Trustees, Dato' Henry Barlow.

The signing ceremony was witnessed by the Assistant Minister to the Chief Minister of Sabah, Datuk Abidin Madingkir and the Honorary British Consul for Sabah, Mr David Powell.

According to Datuk Abidin, the Danum Valley Tropical Rainforest Research and Training Programmes have been ongoing since 1984 as part of a collaborative effort between Yayasan Sabah Group, Sabah Forestry Department, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia Sabah and The Royal Society, United Kingdom.

“Seven Memorandums of Understanding were signed to continue the collaborative programme,” he added.

“In the seventh quinquennium (2015 – 2020), the Royal Society was represented by SEARRP to administer South East Asia Rainforest Research Programme, primarily based in Danum Valley,” he shared.

“Similar to the previously signed MoU, the signing of this MoU aims to train young Sabahan scientists in tropical environmental research to contribute to the development of Southeast Asia

rainforest science, forest management and conservation strategies, which have involved more than 140 multinational researchers.

“Through this programme, 750 peer-reviewed journals have been published by Danum and SEARRP Linked Scientists, and more than 120 PhDs and Masters thesis have been completed or are being completed,” he further explained.

Datuk Abidin also commended the collaborative effort made thus far by the organisations involved in providing opportunities for research and training in rainforest science, which will be essential in nurturing a new generation of experts capable of tackling the complex issues related to rainforest conservation and management.

“Young Sabahan scientists will advance sustainable practices and policymaking by assuming leadership or senior managerial positions in government agencies, research institutions and universities,” he said with certainty.

“Realising the importance of research for a better understanding of forest ecology and sustainable resource management, the establishment of long-term research plots such as 50-hectare plots and long-term forest dynamics will significantly advance our understanding of tropical forest ecosystems and their conditions,” he added.

Not only was the DVCA voted the second most influential study centre in the world during the 2015 Annual Conference of the Society for Tropical Ecology, but it is also recognised as a premier source of tropical rainforest research.

“Danum Valley has amassed a wealth of scientific information over the past four decades for the development of sustainable tourism activities and a non-destructive approach to the utilisation of the tropical rainforest. Therefore, we must acknowledge the efforts which have enabled the establishment of the Borneo Rainforest Lodge,” urge Datuk Abidin.

Yayasan Sabah Group, through its DVMC, is committed to expanding its research networks with global network organisations to achieve a more significant impact in addressing the complexities of the environment. This is evident through close collaboration with Kyoto University on an orangutan research programme.

“I am confident this MoU will propel research and training activities in the DVCA and will contribute greatly to scientific research advancements and the development of effective mitigation strategies in addressing challenges and threats posed by climate change,” he concluded.

Similarly, Prof. Ian Douglas’ book titled 'Water and The Rainforest in Malaysian Borneo: Hydrological Research at the Danum Valley Field Centre' was launched by Datuk Abidin at the same ceremony, chronicling Prof. Ian Douglas’ thirty years of hydrological study at the DVCA.

The event was followed by a seminar on the Danum Valley Rainforest Research and Training Programme, which was participated by 80 researchers from various departments, agencies,

organisations, and institutions including Yayasan Sabah Group, Universiti Teknologi MARA Sabah, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Sabah Forestry Department, World Wide Fund for Nature Malaysia, and many more.

The seminar aims to provide insights into the Danum Valley Conservation Area's research and training efforts, emphasising its importance for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.



Pix 1 : Dato' Sri Haji Gulamhaidar (seated,third from left), Datuk Frederick (seated, second from left) and Datuk Dr. Glen (seated, second from right) signing the MoU renewal documents witnessed by Datuk Abidin (standing, third from left) and Mr David (standing, third from right). Also in the picture are Encik Hanafiah (seated, third from right), Dr. Waidi (seated, left) and Dato' Henry (seated, right).



Pix 2 : Dato' Sri Haji Gulamhaidar (third from left), Datuk Frederick (second from left) and Datuk Dr. Glen (second from right) displaying the signed documents witnessed by Datuk Abidin (fourth from left) and Mr David (third from right). Also in the picture are Encik Hanafiah (fourth from right), Dr. Waidi (left) and Dato' Henry (right).



Pix 3 : Datuk Abidin (centre) officiating the 'Water and The Rainforest in Malaysian Borneo: Hydrological Research at the Danum Valley Field Centre' book witnessed by Dato' Sri Haji Gulamhaidar (third from left), Mr David (third from right) , Datuk Frederick (second from left), Dr Waidi (left), Datuk Dr Glen (second from right) and Dato' Henry (right).

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