



KUMPULAN YAYASAN SABAH

Menara Tun Mustapha

Kompleks Ibu Pejabat Yayasan Sabah

Teluk Likas, Peti Surat 11623

88817 Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia

Tel: 6 088 326300 Faks: 6 088 326424

E-mel: ysinfo@ysnet.org.my

Laman Web: <http://www.yayasansabahgroup.org.my>

SIARAN MEDIA

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INIKEA RESOURCES & WILDLIFE SURVEY PROMISES NEW FINDINGS POTENTIALS

KOTA KINABALU (Thursday) – A Seminar on Innoprise-IKEA Tropical Forest Rehabilitation Project (INIKEA) Resources & Wildlife Survey 2023, which unveiled new sightings in the Sungai Tiagau Forest Reserve, was officiated by the Assistant Minister to the Chief Minister of Sabah, Datuk Abidin bin Madingkir on 2 May 2024 at Shangri-La Tanjung Aru, Kota Kinabalu.

The seminar is a follow-up to INIKEA Resources and Wildlife Survey from 7 to 20 August 2023.

The seminar served as a forum for researchers and scientists to present and share their survey findings. The interesting and notable papers focused on the abundance and distribution of wildlife, potential threats such as poaching and forest fires, the impact of surrounding land use, and the potential for tourism development, focusing on critical aspects such as attractions, logistics, and accessibility. Moreover, researchers explored future avenues for studying flora and fauna.

Also in attendance were the Executive Chairman of Innoprise Corporation Sdn. Bhd., Datuk Jasnih bin Daya representing the Director of Yayasan Sabah, the Managing Director of IKEA Social Entrepreneurship Private Limited, Miss Åsa Skogström Feldt, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation Sabah, Datuk Mohd. Hanafiah bin Mohd. Kassim, the Deputy Chief Conservator of Forests (Research and Development), Dr. Arthur Chung representing the Chief Conservator of Forests cum Chairman of the Maliau Basin Management Committee, State and Federal Government heads of departments, NGOs and Yayasan Sabah Group officials.

In his official launching speech, Datuk Abidin remarked, "The recent sightings of wildlife returning to the forests indicate the project's success in rehabilitating the severely degraded forests. Therefore, I am confident that this seminar will be instrumental in deepening our understanding of the resources and wildlife abundance of the rehabilitated forest."

The INIKEA collaboration dates back to 1998, stemming from an agreement between Innoprise Corporation Sdn. Bhd. and the Sow-A-Seed Foundation (Insamlingsstiftelsen Sått Frö) to restore 14,300 hectares of degraded forests in the Sungai Tiagau Forest Reserve by reintroducing native tree species that were lost due to logging and forest fires. The project has become one of Malaysia's largest enrichment-planted areas and the longest active forest restoration area.

Organised by the Yayasan Sabah Group, the seminar saw ten presenters from various campsite areas present intriguing findings and insights regarding the biodiversity, wildlife abundance, and challenges in the INIKEA project area.

In this regard, Datuk Abidin hopes that the participants will actively participate in providing feedback and exchange findings. He stressed that feedback and input are valuable in supporting the development of INIKEA's inaugural strategic management plan.

Datuk Abidin also commended the invaluable support from various government departments and organisations such as the Sabah Wildlife Department, Sabah Forestry Department (SFD), Sabah Parks, Sabah Museum, HUTAN Kinabatangan Orangutan Conservation Programme (HUTAN-KOCP), WWF-Malaysia, Sabah Environmental Trust (SET), Universiti Malaysia Sabah, and Universiti Teknologi Mara, noting that their expertise will make a significant contribution to be a guideline in the formulation of the INIKEA Strategic Management Plan detailing plans and governance for the coming years.

"The findings will support the formulation of the management plan and will be implemented as the key component," he said with emphasis.

Yayasan Sabah Group remains committed to implementing sustainable forest management methods, reinforcing its environmental and social responsibility. By forging strong partnerships with government agencies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and the private sector, Yayasan Sabah Group ensures that restoration efforts are environmentally sustainable and socially beneficial.



Pix 1 : Group Manager of Conservation and Environmental Management Division of Yayasan Sabah Group, Dr. Waidi Sinun (left) sheds light on INIKEA's Resource and Wildlife Survey to Datuk Abidin.



Pix 2: Datuk Abidin addressing the seminar's participants and invitees.



Pix 3 : Datuk Jasnih (second from the left) presenting a memento to Datuk Abidin (third from right). Also in the picture are Dr. Arthur (left), Ms. Åsa (second from right) and Datuk Mohd. Hanafiah (right).

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For more information, please contact : **Sam S. Karnail**
Group Manager, Corporate Communications Division
Yayasan Sabah Group
Tel. : 088-326448
Fax : 088-421526/088-326424
Email : ynwaskarnail@gmail.com