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WILDLIFE AND RESOURCES OVERVIEW SEMINAR IN MALIAU BASIN: YAYASAN SABAH GROUP STRENGTHENS CONSERVATION EFFORTS

KOTA KINABALU (Thursday): The Yayasan Sabah Group organised a Seminar of Maliau Basin Conservation Area's Wildlife and Resources Survey on 14 November 2024 at the Shangri-La Tanjung Aru, Kota Kinabalu.

Officiated by the Assistant Minister to the Chief Minister of Sabah, Datuk Abidin bin Madingkir, the seminar featured the latest findings on biodiversity in the Maliau Basin Conservation Area (MBCA), in addition to strengthening conservation efforts in Sabah.

In his speech, Datuk Abidin expressed his appreciation to the Yayasan Sabah Group for conducting a 14-day survey in May 2024. This effort aims to obtain the latest data on wildlife, assess the threats faced, and explore the potential for ecotourism development in the Maliau Basin. He also highlighted Sabah as the "Land Below The Wind" and a paradise full of biodiversity, strengthening Malaysia's position as a country with mega-biodiversity.

"Sabah is blessed with natural beauty and rich biodiversity, which gives high value not only in terms of the environment but also the economy and socio-economics of the people," said Datuk Abidin.

"Conservation areas such as Danum Valley, Maliau Basin, and Mount Kinabalu are the main ecotourism attractions that also open up job opportunities for Sabahans," he said further.

He also outlined the challenges faced by the state of Sabah and Malaysia as a country in conservation efforts, including threats from development, climate change, and pollution. According to him, threats like this are driven by economic growth and demand for natural resources, but Sabah is committed to sustainable management that is balanced between development and environmental sustainability.

This survey programme involves collaboration between the Yayasan Sabah Group and various government agencies and NGOs, including the Sabah Wildlife Department, Sabah Forestry Department, Sabah Parks, WWF-Malaysia, HUTAN-Kinabatangan Orangutan Conservation

Programme, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Borneo Tourism Institute and Sabah Tourist Guide Association as well as international organisations such as the IKEA Sow-A-Seed Foundation. One hundred thirty participants, including researchers and experts from various institutions, participated in a survey including nine Maliau Basin campsites.

This seminar opens up the space for presenting interesting findings from the survey, including the latest information on species distribution, wildlife threats, and the potential for more sustainable ecotourism development.

Datuk Abidin also expressed his appreciation to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Sustainability for the financial support through the National Conservation Trust Fund for Natural Resources (NCTF), which is important for continuing this conservation effort.

"The Yayasan Sabah Group's commitment and support from various parties have contributed greatly to protecting Sabah's biodiversity treasures. This seminar is proof of our determination to preserve this treasure for future generations," he concluded.



Picture 1: Sabah's commitment to nature conservation is evident through this seminar, bringing together various agencies and researchers.



Picture 2: Some of the participants presenting their findings.



Picture 3: Aerial view of the Maliau Basin Conservation Area.

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