

Sustainable Forest Management Practices and Environmental Protection in Malaysia

ABSTRACT

Malaysia has large tracts of forest which have been converted to give way to settlements and agricultural and industrial areas. Despite logging is still being carried out annually, Malaysia can still boast to be able to maintain and protect the environment through vast areas of forested land as Permanent Reserved Forest which account about 14.39 million ha or 43.8% of its total land area at the end of 2006. At the same time forestry sector's share of GDP is 1.10% in 2006, and has contributed significantly to the economic growth and development of Malaysia through foreign exchange, employment opportunities, industrial development and revenue to the State Governments. How does Malaysia achieve this? The answer is through Sustainable Forest Resource Management (SFM). SFM involves not only the continuous functions and services provided by forest but also about meeting the global concerns and expectations in managing the forest with greater emphasis on environmental protection and conservation of biological diversity. Subsequently forest certification was introduced as market incentive to improve the quality of forest management including protection of environment. In this connection, Malaysian Criteria and Indicators were also formulated to enhance social and environment aspects; compliance of the activities will be rewarded with certificate. To date, 8 timber producing states in Peninsular Malaysia have been awarded the certificate by Malaysian Timber Certification Council after being assessed by independent assessors. Issuance of forest management certification manifested itself our commitment towards sustainable forest management through the three pillars viz, economically viable, socially well-aware and environmentally sound. Thus, the practice of SFM by Forestry Department Malaysia

Keyword: Sustainable forest management; Tropical forest resources; Environmental protection; Forest certification; Forest harvesting