

100 pct SFM certification in Permanent Reserve Forests by 2025

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Wan Junaidi (right) fields questions from the press.

KUCHING: Malaysia has set a target of 100 per cent forest certification for Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) in Permanent Reserve Forests by 2025 through its various initiatives such as Goal 2, Target 4 of the National Policy on Biological Biodiversity (2016-2025).

Minister of Natural Resources and Environment Dato Sri Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar, in revealing this, said Malaysia was among the top-notch countries in the world practising SFM management.

“On top of that, Malaysia is recognised as one of 12 mega diverse countries in the world, and blessed with vast areas of natural ecosystems. With this natural heritage interlinked with our rich cultural diversity, Malaysia believes that eco-tourism is one of sectors that has enormous potential for a new economy and wealth-creation,” Wan Junaidi said in at the recent ‘4th Singapore Dialogues for Sustainable World Resources 2017’.

Wan Juniadi, who is also Santubong MP, added that the government had identified Malaysia Mega Biodiversity Hub (MMBH) to be one of the initiatives under the Economic Transformation Programme (ETP).

“The objective of the MMBH is to focus international attention on Malaysia’s outstanding biodiversity, to optimise growth of socially responsible tourism and to foster an ethic of sustainable management over Malaysia’s natural areas. Through MMBH, Malaysia will be able to showcase its conservation and rich natural heritage and culture as well as research and development efforts that are being undertaken to conserve and promote the wide use of our rich biodiversity,” he said.

However, he added that developing countries like Malaysia faced challenges in their efforts to achieve the goal for Sustainable Forest Management due to insufficient financial resources.

“The developed countries and relevant agencies such as the Green Climate Fund under the UNFCCC have a key role in ensuring that adequate financial, technological and technical capacity are made available to support forest conservation not only to Malaysia but to all countries that are undertaking forest conservation efforts.”

On a related issue, Wan Juniadi said Malaysia, as one of major timber products exporting countries, also aimed to further enhance the economic earnings from its forest resources on a sustainable basis.

“This is in line with Global Forest Goal 2 under the United Nation Forum on Forests (UNFF) to enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits. To strike a balance between economic gains and conservation, we have successfully embarked on a national timber certification scheme known as Malaysian Timber Certification Scheme (MTCS).

“The main objectives of MTCS are to promote sustainable forest management practices in Malaysia through forest management certification; and to allow the timber industry to produce and export wood products which have been certified under MTCS to meet the needs of international market through the certified Chain of Custody (CoC).

“MTCS has gained recognition from Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) in 2009. This recognition is important to help the Malaysian timber industry to market wood products in green markets such as in Europe, USA and Australia,” he said.

Wan Junaidi added that timber certification was intended to ensure that forests were managed sustainably in the country.

“Conservation of biodiversity is one of the goals and roles in forest management standard known as ‘Malaysian Criteria and Indicators (MC & I) for Forest Management Certification’. Aspects of biodiversity conservation and wildlife preservation need to be considered during the planning and implementation of forest management.”

He reiterated that to further ensure sustainable management of the forests, various programmes other than the forest certification initiative such as enhancement of forest law, enforcement and governance, research and development as well as best agricultural practices had been carried out.”

Wan Junaidi said in Sarawak and Sabah, the Heart of Borneo (HoB) Initiative was a voluntary transboundary cooperation involving Indonesia and Brunei aimed at conserving and managing the contiguous tropical forest in Borneo.

“The HoB approximately covers 200,000 km² (about 20 million hectares) of ecologically interconnected rainforest in Borneo with Malaysia contributing 6 million hectares,” he added.

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