

POLICY STATEMENT

The Sarawak Forest Policy 2019 is an official statement of the State Government on forestry and related issues for the needs of managing forest and marine in Sarawak, which consists of:

- 1) Provision of sufficient forest area and marine ecosystems for the benefit of the present and future generations of Sarawak to:
 - i. Ensure sound environment and climate of the State; safeguarding of soil fertility, and continuous supplies of water for domestic and industrial use, irrigation and general agricultural purposes; and prevention of damage by flooding and erosion to rivers and to agricultural land;
 - ii. Supply in perpetuity all forest resources for the benefit of economy, agriculture, inland fisheries, domestic and other industries; and
 - iii. Maintain and preserve the marine ecosystem for the benefit of economy, fisheries, domestic and industries related to forestry.
- 2) Management of Permanent Forest Estate (PFE) for the benefit of economy, social and environment in accordance with the principles of Sustainable Forest Management (SFM).
- 3) Emphasis on good management of forest areas within the state land and alienated land.
- 4) Sustainable production of forest resources for the needs of domestic and export markets.

POLICY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this State Forestry Policy are:

- 1) To maintain the existing permanent forest estates, totally protected areas and forest cover through better and more efficient governance and planning;
- 2) To increase the area of permanent forest estates and totally protected areas in the State;
- 3) To preserve and manage permanent forest reserves in accordance with the principles of sustainable forest management whilst optimising its contribution to socio-economic developments of the State;
- 4) To strengthen forest legislation and enforcement for the sustainability and conservation of forest resources;
- 5) To preserve and conserve biological diversity to prevent extinction and deterioration of species, loss of ecosystems and genetic resources;
- 6) To enhance the management of forest resources through research and development;
- 7) To foster community and urban forestry programme for community well-being through eco-tourism, education and training;
- 8) To restore degraded forest areas through reforestation and rehabilitation programme in order to increase the area of forest cover and trees;
- 9) To rationalise and strengthen the development of wood-based industries;
- 10) To optimise on updated technology applications for improving the effectiveness of forest management;
- 11) To strive to fulfil obligations under international treaties and conventions;
- 12) To strengthen national and international collaborations on knowledge and technology transfer in forestry; and
- 13) To develop and enhance human and financial resources in sustainable forest management.

THRUST 1: SUSTAINING FOREST RESOURCES

The establishment and conservation of forest area and its resources must be guaranteed in ensuring their optimal contribution towards the State's socio-economic development, environmental stability and well-being of the citizens. These resources can be continuously beneficial for the present and future generations.

STRATEGY 1: Establishment, Maintenance and Protection of Permanent Forest Estate Areas (PFE), Totally Protected Areas (TPA) and Other Forest Areas

Forest areas and forest cover must be maintained, managed and developed in line with the State's commitment on Permanent Forest Estate Areas (PFE) and Totally Protected Areas (TPA). The PFE areas are meant for production forests while TPAs are for conservation and protection of forest and wild life. Other forest areas will be managed for environmental wellness.

ACTION PLAN

1. Identify and constitute forest areas as permanent forest estate and totally protected area;
2. Strengthen the governance of PFE, TPA and other forest areas;
3. Retain the existing PFE and substitute the PFE which has been excised or revoked; and
4. Increase the acreage of forest area and tree cover.

STRATEGY 2: Enhance Forest Governance

PFE, TPA and forest areas in State Land shall be managed systematically through good governance to ensure optimal contribution to socio-economic and environmental wellness.

ACTION PLAN

1. Delineate and properly manage forest boundaries;
2. Enhance implementation of Forest Management Plan or Forest Harvesting Plan for timber license areas; and
3. Implement forest resource inventory and forest stand assessment.

STRATEGY 3: Strengthening Forest Management in Water Catchment Areas

Management and conservation of forest in water catchment areas is vital to ensure its contribution in providing an adequate supply of clean water for domestic and commercial purposes. All these forest areas also serve to stabilize the environment, preserve and conserve biological diversity as well as social well-being.

ACTION PLAN

1. Enhance strategic partnerships among relevant agencies in managing, protecting and monitoring water catchment areas; and
2. Implement sustainable forest management practices through Reduced Impact Logging (RIL) and other relevant guidelines.

STRATEGY 4: Strengthening Forest Landscape Restoration

Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) will act as a solution to the loss and degradation of forests and as a contribution to sustainable development through the ecological, social and economic values and functions of degraded landscapes. FLR plays a major component in restoring functional forest ecosystems within landscapes so that forests can co-exist and subsist in a landscape mosaic together with other land uses, thus addressing the wider issues of encroachment, local disputes and habitat management of endangered species.

ACTION PLAN

1. To identify, quantify and evaluate restoration opportunities;
2. Implement restoration and rehabilitation of targeted FLR areas using various approaches including agroforestry systems, enrichment planting, etc;
3. Encourage participation of public in restoration and rehabilitation programme; and
4. To provide enabling conditions for the implementation of FLR.

STRATEGY 5: Recognition of Forestry Best Management Practices

The effectiveness of sustainable forest management practices for PFE has to be measured through transparent and accountable assessments. Good forest management practices can be measured through forest management certifications based on international standards.

ACTION PLAN

1. Enforce policies on forest management certification practices;
2. Provide enabling conditions for the implementation of forest certification; and
3. Strengthen forest best management practices through international collaborations.

THRUST 2: FOREST LAW ENFORCEMENT

Prevention and enforcement activities should be implemented effectively and efficiently to guarantee the protection of forest resources. Existing forest legislation should be updated in line with current challenges to ensure the effectiveness of enforcement activities.

STRATEGY 1: Strengthening Forest Legislation

Existing ordinances, regulations and relevant procedures need to be regularly revised to ensure their relevance with the current challenges and developments.

ACTION PLAN

1. Strengthen relevant ordinances, rules and regulations related to forestry;
2. Build the capacity of officers on forest legislation; and
3. Enhance awareness and continuous dissemination on the latest legislation to stakeholders.

STRATEGY 2: Enhancement on the Efficiency of Law Enforcement

Forest law enforcement should be implemented through proper training and understanding of existing ordinances, regulations and relevant procedures. Effectiveness of enforcement operation can be enhanced through close collaboration with all stakeholders and application of advanced technology.

ACTION PLAN

1. Enhance integrity of enforcement officers;
2. Strengthen coordination committee for combating illegal logging and illegal trading of wild life;
3. Formulate policies, strategies and action plans for license holders to establish their own Compliance Unit;
4. Implement effective and efficient monitoring, prevention and investigation activities;
5. Strengthen enforcement in revenue collection system;
6. Strengthen collaboration with other relevant enforcement agencies; and
7. Equip officers with comprehensive knowledge and skills in enforcement.

THRUST 3: FOREST AND WILD LIFE CONSERVATION

Effective and efficient forest land use and marine habitats planning are essential for protection and conservation of forest and wild life. Forest and wild life are State's heritage which are highly valuable and need to be conserved and managed for the benefit of present and future generations. Balancing nature conservation and development requires integrated planning, management action and continuous monitoring.

STRATEGY 1: Strengthening Conservation Plan

Success and effectiveness of the integrated management of forest and wild life habitats should be supported by a comprehensive conservation plan. Wild life conservation management, including endemic and threatened species, needs to be implemented efficiently and systematically.

ACTION PLAN

1. Develop strategic wild life conservation and management plan;
2. Identify high biodiversity areas to be constituted for conservation;
3. Rehabilitate Endangered, Rare and Threatened (ERT) species and their habitats;
4. Develop and implement monitoring programme on ERT species and TPA; and
5. Enhance strategic management of wild life within logging concessions areas.

STRATEGY 2: Establishment of Protected Areas Corridor

Protected areas corridor is established to reduce pressure on wild life habitats and to maintain the sustainability of biological diversity. This includes the establishment of buffer zones.

ACTION PLAN

1. Identify, establish and manage corridors linking protected areas including High Conservation Value (HCV) areas; and
2. Establish buffer zones for every TPA and relevant HCV areas.

STRATEGY 3: Management of Human and Wild Life Conflict

Conflict between humans and wild life may occur when there are interactions between wild life and people in a given area and resulting in negative impacts on people, their resources, wild life or their habitats. The importance of wild life habitats should be given priority in land use planning and development.

ACTION PLAN

1. Enforce relevant laws effectively;
2. Revise and formulate relevant laws and regulations; and
3. Establish and upgrade wild life rescue and rehabilitation centre; and
4. Manage, monitor and control existence of foreign and invasive wild life species.

STRATEGY 4: Management and Development of Totally Protected Areas

TPAs shall be properly managed to maintain and enhance their integrity and ensure protection of forest resources. Such management shall include development programmes with the participation and engagement of local stakeholders in the management and monitoring of TPAs.

ACTION PLAN

1. Prepare and implement Management Plan and Annual Operation Plan for each TPA;
2. Develop and upgrade infrastructure and interpretation centre in TPA areas;
3. Promote the usage of green technology for infrastructures in TPA; and
4. Enhance the capacity and capability of Special Park/Wild Life Committee and Honorary Wild Life Ranger.
5. Strengthen community participation and engagement in management and monitoring of TPAs.

STRATEGY 5: Management of Wild life

A comprehensive wild life management is needed to ensure the sustainability of wild life species in the State. This shall be reflected in the plan to improve the existing Wild Life Protection Ordinance and the Master Plan for Wild Life in Sarawak. At the same time, plan must provide for the enhancement of existing facilities and capacity.

ACTION PLAN

1. Revise and formulate relevant laws, regulations and procedures related to wild life;
2. Promote conservation and compliance of laws related to wild life;
3. Develop capacity in wild life biology and forensic; and
4. Establish rescue centers and formulate translocation programme for wild life species affected by certain development.

THRUST 4: FOREST REVENUE MANAGEMENT

Forestry sector is one of the major contributors to the State's economic development. Planning, management and administration related to the revenue collection should be transparent and conducted systematically. Potential new revenue from the forestry sector shall be explored to maximise the State's revenue.

STRATEGY 1: Strengthening Revenue Collection

Effective mechanism through holistic approach in revenue collection will ensure reduction of leakages and enhance revenue collection.

ACTION PLAN

1. Implement revenue assessment within timber license area;
2. Implement effective and efficient audit programme on revenue collection;
3. Establish strategic collaboration between relevant agencies to ensure efficient monitoring and revenue collection; and
4. Review and improve revenue collection system.

STRATEGY 2: Diversification and Optimisation of Forest Revenue

New revenue sources should be explored and diversified in order to ensure the continuation and increased contribution of forestry sector in driving the State's economy. Besides, the existing forestry revenue shall be reviewed in line with current development. In addition, the existing charges and rates including royalty, premium and cess as well as new revenue sources should be compatible for the sustainable development of forestry industry.

ACTION PLAN

1. Review existing charges and rates for forest products and services;
2. Identify new sources of income from forestry sector; and
3. Strengthen promotion and marketing of forest-based eco-tourism.

THRUST 5: RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, INNOVATION AND COMMERCIALISATION

Research and development is the backbone to the implementation of sustainable forest management practices through systematic and integrated research with the application of latest technology. In addition, innovative research findings have the potential to be commercialised.

STRATEGY 1: Strengthening Research and Development (R&D) in Sustainable Forest Management Implementation

Research and development programme in the forestry sector continues to be enhanced to ensure the implementation of sustainable forest management practices for both natural forests and planted forests to achieve their objectives.

ACTION PLAN

1. Conduct research programmes in production forest areas;
2. Apply research findings for sustainable forest management;
3. Strengthen collaborations in research with all the relevant parties;
4. Intensify research and development for suitable planting materials for planted forests and restoration programmes;
5. Establish nurseries and seed orchards for high quality planting materials with disease and pests resistance; and
6. Enhance collaboration with industry players on R&D.

STRATEGY 2: Strengthening Research and Development in Forest and Marine Biodiversity Conservation

Research in forestry and marine sectors should be continuously strengthened for their contributions to the State's sustainable development. Preservation and conservation of forest and marine biodiversity should also be diversified and enhanced in a holistic manner.

ACTION PLAN

1. Enhance research and inventory of forest and marine biodiversity resources;
2. Intensify multidisciplinary research on forest and marine biodiversity resources; and
3. Conduct forest and marine conservation programmes.

STRATEGY 3: Strengthening Flora and Fauna Integrated Information Centre

Comprehensive documentation of forest biodiversity resources should be emphasised in implementing sustainable forest management. Data and information should be updated continuously as a reference for various agencies concerned.

ACTION PLAN

1. Strengthen integrated database management system;
2. Integrate information and research findings to support development of forest management, planted forests and wild life; and
3. Strengthen research data and information sharing through collaborations with relevant research institutions.

STRATEGY 4: Commercialisation of Research and Development (R&D) Products

New approach in research programme should be developed through innovative, creative and competitive research. Major focus is given to commercialise research products with added value and are capable of delivering high economic impacts. Collaboration with other research agencies should continue to be expanded for the purpose of technology and information transfer.

ACTION PLAN

1. Develop R&D programmes which have commercialisation potential;
2. Identify potential products from planted trees;
3. Implement innovative research to improve development of forest management, planted forests and wild life;
4. Improve research capabilities through knowledge sharing and capacity building;
5. Encourage intellectual property registration (e.g. patent) of research findings with commercial potential; and
6. Intensify international research collaboration for research capacity development.

THRUST 6: PLANTED FOREST DEVELOPMENT

The establishment of planted forest aimed to reduce dependency on timber resources from natural forests as well as supplementing raw materials for timber-based industries in Sarawak. The development of planted forest areas also include non-timber forest products which has commercial values to meet market demand.

STRATEGY 1: Strengthening the Development of Planted Forest

The existing planted forest should be strengthened through the implementation of comprehensive and effective action plans to ensure that the objectives of planted forest establishment are achieved. Priorities should be given to the management, implementation and monitoring aspects.

ACTION PLAN

1. Review existing planted forest policies, rules, regulations and guidelines;
2. Plant various fast growing timber species with high yield and commercial value;
3. Implement and enforce best management practices in planted forest;
4. Prepare emergency response plan for planted forest;
5. Encourage community involvement through establishment of community planted forest; and
6. Strengthen planted forest development monitoring system through various mechanisms.

THRUST 7: FORESTRY INDUSTRY

Forestry industry is one of the main contributors to the socio-economic development of Sarawak. Therefore, adequate and sustainable forest resources are essential to ensure the continuity of downstream activities. This includes timber and non-timber based raw material supply.

STRATEGY 1: Sustainable Timber Supply to Timber Industry

Continuous timber supply from either natural forest or planted forest is essential for the survival of downstream industries.

ACTION PLAN

1. Control and monitor timber production from natural forest and planted forest in accordance with sustainable forest production and industrial requirements;
2. Identify alternative sources of raw materials including import of raw materials; and
3. Review policies and guidelines related to the import of timber-based raw materials.

STRATEGY 2: Development of Non-Timber Forest Product Industry

Non-timber forest products have the potential to contribute to the development of the State's economy, including livelihood improvement of local communities. These products need to be intensively developed and explored by providing various incentives to the stakeholders.

ACTION PLAN

1. Encourage participation of all parties in the development of non-timber forest products industry;
2. Collaborate with relevant agencies and industry players to strengthen the development of non-timber forest products industry;
3. Provide policies and guidelines related to non-timber forest products industry; and
4. Strengthen promotion and marketing of non-timber forest products.

THRUST 8: SOCIAL AND URBAN FORESTRY

Social forestry programme is beneficial to the communities that depend on forests as a source of livelihood. Urban forest programme seek to improve the communities' quality of life while providing recreational facilities and serve as 'green lung' to the cities.

STRATEGY 1: Strengthening Social Forestry

Social forestry is an important forest management approach to ensure the well-being and to uplift the livelihood of communities. In addition, it contributes to the protection, conservation and productivity of the forests.

ACTION PLAN

1. Strengthen the institutional framework and functions of social forestry;
2. Prepare, review and evaluate long-term plan of communal forest utilisation for socio-economic development and capacity building; and
3. Implement and monitor social forestry and community development programmes and activities.

STRATEGY 2: Strengthening Urban Forestry

Urban forestry plays a vital role in enhancing the quality of life and provide urban communities with recreational places and also serve as a 'green lung' to the cities. These areas add to the acreage of forest cover in the State.

ACTION PLAN

1. Provide technical advice for green city programme and implement urban forestry activities;
2. Identify and establish 'green lung' in urban areas; and
3. Develop urban forest management plan with stakeholders.

THRUST 9: TECHNOLOGY APPLICATION IN FORESTRY MANAGEMENT

The use of advanced technology is able to improve efficiency in management, research and conservation of forest resources as well as contributing towards effective land use planning.

STRATEGY 1: Leverage on Advanced Technology

Ability to apply advanced technology in forestry can help provide timely and accurate information on land use planning and forest management. Such information can be applied by relevant agencies in making decisions as well as assisting in preparation of state or national level forestry programme and policies.

ACTION PLAN

1. Develop advanced technology system related to forestry;
2. Apply advanced technology for better and efficient forestry activities including management and planning, enforcement, revenue collection, research and conservation, planted forests and non-timber forest processing;
3. Strengthen collaborations with various stakeholders in the application of advanced technology related to forestry; and
4. Establish integrated technology control centre.

THRUST 10: INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Active involvement in forestry issues is very important to improve State's image in sustainable forest management. The government is striving in implementing various obligations and realisation of international agreements that have been signed. Collaboration at regional and international levels in the field of forestry allows for transfer and sharing of knowledge, skills and new technologies.

STRATEGY 1: Implementation of Commitment Under International Agreements

The state government is committed in implementing obligations and international treaties, which have been agreed according to State current constitutions, policies and legislations.

ACTION PLAN

1. Establishment of State International Agreement Evaluation Committee to review and evaluate issues related to treaties on forestry and biodiversity; and
2. Plan and implement programmes related to commitment of international agreement.

STRATEGY 2: Strengthening International Collaboration Related to Forestry Management and Research

International collaboration in the aspect of preservation, conservation and sustainable management of forest resources is essential in enhancing acquisition and adaptation of knowledge and expertise from other countries. This is to elevate the management standards of the forests in the State.

ACTION PLAN

1. Review the effectiveness, benefit and opportunities of international collaborations to the State government;
2. Identify new aspects and needs of collaboration and initiate new projects while ensuring continuous source of funds and other assistance in support thereof;
3. Enhance collaborations and strategic partnerships with stakeholders; and
4. Strengthening monitoring of compliance to terms and conditions of collaboration agreements.

THRUST 11: FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCE

Human resource and sufficient financial provision are important in realising efficient and effective forest management implementation.

STRATEGY 1: Strengthening Financial Resources

Prudent management of financial resources is necessary to ensure all forestry programmes and activities can be properly implemented.

ACTION PLAN

1. Secure sufficient internal financial resources;
2. Identify and secure external financial resources; and
3. Establish special fund for forest enforcement.

STRATEGY 2: Strengthening Human Resource Development

Efficient and competent human resource is vital to ensure the success of forest management implementation.

ACTION PLAN

1. Enhance the capability and capacity of human resources in various forest management activities through appropriate training and exposure; and
2. Inculcate moral values in human resource management.

THRUST 12: COMMUNICATION, EDUCATION AND PUBLIC AWARENESS

Awareness on the importance of forests and wild life continues to be disseminated through communication, education and public awareness programmes. Planning and implementation of these programmes encompass all levels of stakeholders including communities in Sarawak in line with the current challenges and developments.

STRATEGY 1: Strengthening Communication, Education and Public Awareness Programme

Stakeholders participation should be enhanced through continuous education and awareness programmes to ensure the sustainability of forests and wild life. Existing programmes needs to be strengthened and be more impactful to the stakeholders.

ACTION PLAN

1. Strengthen communication programme including dialogue, consultation and etc. with public and other stakeholders;
2. Conduct education and awareness programme on the importance of forest and environmental protection;
3. Encourage continuous participation of non-government organisations (NGOs) and timber industry players; and
4. Strengthen functions and enhance participation of Special Park/Wild Life Committee and Honorary Wild Life Rangers.