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Tuesday, 6 September 2016

Pledge to extend conservation efforts

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The development of ecotourism at peat swamp forests can create an alternative source of income for local communities.

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THE Selangor government has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Global Environment Centre (GEC) to work together in managing and conserving the state's peat swamp forests.

The main objective of this MoU is to enhance conservation of peat swamp forests and reduce the risk of peatland fires and haze.

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stakeholders involving the state government, private sector and local communities to manage nearly 100,000ha of peat swamp forests in Selangor.

The state government, through the Selangor Forestry Department has been working with GEC to continuously protect and rehabilitate peat swamp forests in Selangor since signing their first MoU in 2010.

It has agreed to expand its collaboration with GEC after a review of the achievements.

Selangor Tourism, Consumer Affairs, and Environment Committee chairman Elizabeth Wong said the state government intended to strengthen cooperation with GEC to enhance community participation in forest conservation programmes in Selangor, particularly for peat swamp forests.

Selangor Forestry Department director Dr Mohd Puat Dahalan said the MoU would facilitate cooperation with GEC until 2023.

“With the MoU in place, the department can step up implementation of the Integrated Management Plan (2014-2023) for The North Selangor Peat Swamp Forest, as well as expand actions to other sites in Selangor.

“This MoU also allows the state Forestry Department to work closely with GEC to sustainably conserve and rehabilitate our peat swamp forests in the long term,” said Dr Mohd Puat.

GEC director Faizal Parish said the NGO intended to continue the strong collaboration with Selangor Forestry Department.



Canal blocking to restore peat swamp's high water table is part of efforts to preserve the unique forests.

“We have been working closely with the department since 2008 in the conservation of peat swamp forests in Selangor.

“It is critical to conserve these unique forests in order to preserve our heritage as well as reduce coastal flooding and enhance water supply for agriculture. It will also prevent peatland fires and haze.

“In the future, we will expand our work to support peatland management and rehabilitation in all parts of Selangor.

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“We hope that we can enhance our collaboration with local communities and the private sector, to support the protection and rehabilitation of peatlands,” Faizal added.

GEC was established in 1998 to work on environmental issues of global importance. The centre is registered in Malaysia as a non-profit organisation but works regionally and internationally both directly and through many partners.

It supports information exchange and capacity building as well as undertakes strategic projects particularly in developing countries. It works in partnership with other like-minded agencies worldwide.

GEC has been appointed by Asean member states as a technical and operational support partner of the Asean Peatland Management Strategy 2006-2020 and has been working on peatland management and rehabilitation in Malaysia since 1998.







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