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Tuesday, 6 September 2016

Seminar on the best peatland management strategies

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A file image of burning peatland in Johan Setia, near Klang, Selangor.

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A SEMINAR entitled Tropical Peatlands in a Global Context was held in Cameron Highlands to share knowledge and experience on peatland management in Malaysia and the world, last month.

The event, organised by the International Mire Conservation Group (IMCG) and Malaysia's Global Environment Centre (GEC), featured about 30 of the world's top peatland experts.

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issues and conservation measures in their regions as well as discussed the findings from visits to key peatlands in Malaysia and Brunei undertaken between Aug 19 and 26.

The experts visited six important peat sites in Malaysia and Brunei: Maludam National Park and Kayangeran Forest Reserve in Sarawak; Kuala Belait and Badas Peatlands in Brunei; Klias Peninsula in Sabah, North Selangor Peat Swamp Forest in Selangor and a highland peat area in Cameron Highlands.

GEC Director Faizal Parish said everyone needs to take care of peatlands.

“Many key peatlands have been affected by fire over recent months.

“With the current dry season, efforts for fire prevention need to be intensified and the water management of drained sites improved,” he said.

“It is hoped that this visit and seminar will be the beginning of more international cooperation in protecting peatland forests in Malaysia and the world,” he added.

IMCG Deputy Chairman Prof Dr AB Grootjans said he is happy to see the diversity of peatlands in Malaysia and the efforts by the government and other stakeholders to protect the areas.

“We have noted that many key sites are facing pressure from drainage and fires.

“We hope that integrated management measures can be put in place soon to address these issues and other challenges,” he said.

“We hope that we can work with Malaysia and other countries to safeguard peatlands for the benefit of future generations,” he added.

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