



Global Environment  
Centre

## QUARTERLY UPDATE TO GEC BOARD OF MANAGEMENT AND ADVISORY COUNCIL (JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2021)

### Introduction

This report is submitted to the Board of Management and Advisory Council of Global Environment Centre (GEC) to provide updates on the progress of GEC's activities and finances for the third quarter (Q3) of 2021, i.e. July to September. In Q3, under the (Full) Movement Control Order 3.0 (MCO 3.0), which commenced on 1 June 2021, GEC was not able to operate fully as no permit was issued by the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) for our daily operations from the offices – headquarters and field offices alike. Most GEC staff worked from home (WFH) throughout this duration and field activities were significantly reduced as well.

### Progress Updates

#### River Care Programme

Under the Global Environment Facility Cycle 5 (GEF5) project on “Mainstreaming Biodiversity into Riverine Management”, the activities at Klang River Basin site were focused more on networking as well as organising and online sharing sessions via Zoom platform. Some of the key activities included:

- Briefing on recycling initiatives with selected local community together with ESECO Sdn Bhd and Rotary Club (District 3300 District Action Group on Environmental Sustainability, DAGES) on 31 July 2021
- Workshop on River Monitoring for local communities on 18 September 2021
- BioBlitz Riverine Biodiversity monitoring through partnership with Home River BioBlitz 2021.
- Awareness talk on the impact of invasive species on the river ecosystem on 26 September 2021

Meanwhile, at the Upper Kinta River Basin (UKB) project site, the Sg Kinta Open Classroom (SKROC) was established, while the plot at the existing pilot bioengineering was expanded as part of the erosion mitigation efforts.



In UKB, the One Stop Education Centre (OSEC) at Kampung Tonggang was fully constructed and furnished through funding from United Nations Development Programme- Orangs Asli/Orang Asal (UNDP-OA) Micro Grant Facility (MGF). The centre was handed over to village chief (Tok Batin) of Kampung Tonggang and is now fully operational under his supervision.



Under the W.A.T.E.R. project, the community in Sg Selangor River Basin directly benefited from community gardens through the harvesting and consumption as well as sale of the fresh produce. Additionally, the Section 19 Resident Association members were trained on river and biodiversity monitoring on 26 September 2021 in conjunction with World Rivers Day 2021.



Harvest from community garden in Sg Selangor River Basin

Aside from project activities, RCP held 15 virtual talks from July to September 2021, including at the Virtual International Greentech & Eco Products Exhibition & Conference Malaysia (IGEM) 2021, RCE Asia-Pacific Forum and Malaysia International Water Convention 2021.

## **Forest and Coastal Programme**

The total lockdown during this quarter and the restrictions under the Malaysia's National Recovery Plan made it significantly difficult to execute Forest and Coastal Programmes' onsite projects. Although conservation, protection, restoration and fire prevention activities are not specifically listed as essential services, FCP managed to secure permission to carry out these works on a small scale, primarily with the involvement of the local community through cooperation and support from the relevant local government authorities. The following are the key activities that have been carried out during this period:

- **Community-based small-scale tree planting initiative: 25,310 trees were planted.**
- **200m of new tidal channel** was successfully constructed at Sungai Limau in Perak involving the local community for MA122 TNB (Phase 2) project
- **Community-based peatland tree nurseries:** A new Komuniti Warisan Hutan Sg. Tenggi Selatan (KWHSTS) Nursery was established at Felda Sg Tenggi Selatan and the nursery is in the early stage of establishment. The temporary nursery has raised about 650 tree saplings to be planted at Bukit Belata (Extension) Forest Reserve (BBEFR).
- **Constructed six (6) units of canal blocks** at FC 32 and 100, Raja Musa Forest Reserve (RMFR).
- **Community-based patrolling and monitoring activities** were conducted by SHGSU (at RMFR), Sahabat Gambut Asli Temuan (SGAT) at KLNFR and KWHSTS at BBEFR, including daily updating of Fire Danger Rating System (FDRS) boards and weekly water table monitoring at the adjacent forest reserves to prevent forest fires, illegal hunting and encroachment.
- **Community online training** on monitoring and maintenance of planted trees, data collection of carbon assessment and photography training was conducted with participation from seven community-based organisations (CBOs), namely Penang Inshore Fisherman Welfare

Association (PIFWA), Sahabat Hutan Bakau Pasir Panjang Laut (SHBPPL), Sahabat Hutan Bakau Kg Gula (SHBKG), Sahabat Hutan Bakau Pulau Tanjung Surat (SHBPTS), Sahabat Setiu, Sahabat Hutan Gambut Selangor Utara (SHGSU) and Komuniti Bakau Kg Taman Nilam (Kedah).

- **Presented several talks** on peat swamp forests for people and climate in online webinars organised by project funders, including Yayasan Sime Darby.



200m of new tidal channel constructed and 1,800 mangrove trees were planted at Sg Limau, Sitiawan Perak.



Community training been conducted online with seven CBOs on 1 October 2021

## **Peatland Programme**

GEC provided technical guidance through a virtual workshop on 5 August to brief National and State Project Management Offices (NPMO and SPMOs) to prepare Annual Work Plan and Budgets (AWPB) and Procurement Plans (PP) for the SMPPEM Project. The workshop was organised by Forestry Department of Peninsular Malaysia (FDPM) as NPMO, GEC assumed the role of technical support agency, which involved project management teams at the national level (Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources and FDPM) and state agencies from Pahang, Selangor, Sabah and Sarawak. This is to kick-start the four-year SMPPEM project which commenced on 17 December 2020.

Under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed with Pahang State Government, the first virtual stakeholder meeting was organised on 16 August 2021, hosted by the State Forestry Department (JPNP). The meeting was participated by 70 representatives from various sectors including government agencies, private sector, researchers and indigenous representatives. Progress of activities implementation were presented by the Pahang State Forestry Department (JPNP), Department of Environment, YP Plantation Holdings (YPPH) and GEC on peatland related management and conservation practices within Pahang, in particular the Southeast Pahang Peatland Landscape.



Progress for Recovery Project with YPPH included a virtual training on peat depth measurement, fire danger rating system (FDRS) and water table monitoring with plantation team on 1 September. A practical demonstration was held during the site visit at the end September. A tripartite meeting between JPNP, YPPH and GEC was held on 28 September to discuss possible benefit sharing mechanism by key parties.

GEC continued its involvement in Malaysian Sustainable Palm Oil (MSPO) Working Group by participated the MSPO standards review discussions from 16 to 27 August 2021. The standard is expected to be finalised by end this year. Support continued for Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil Peatland Working Group (RSPO PLWG) which includes review and comment on the Independent Smallholder Modules on peat, during its public consultation till early September.

GEC supported Yayasan Gambut in organising a virtual Webinar *Pengelolaan Lahan Gambut oleh Masyarakat Lanskap Giam Siak Kecil dan Kerumutan Provinsi Riau* on 3 September. The webinar was funded by IFAD's TAKE-SMPEM, and was a collaborative effort between Environmental and Forestry Service of Riau Provincial Government, SMPEI project and communities from Giam Siak Kecil – Bukit Batu Peatland Landscape. At the webinar, speakers shared the positive outcome of zero-burning peatland management activities such as bee farming and agriculture from the community.



Under the Measurable Action for Haze-Free Sustainable Land Management in Southeast Asia (MAHFSA) project, the Capacity Development Needs and Gap Analysis (CDNGA) report was finalised and endorsed by ASEAN Taskforce for Peatlands (ATFP) on 28 July 2021. The CDNGA report detailed the gaps that exist in data and result management in ASEAN and made recommendations on capacity building options at both national and regional levels. The updated publication of the ASEAN Guideline on Peatland Fire Management was finalised and adopted by ATFP on 13 August and it will be made available on the ASEAN Haze Portal. The APMS Review Main Report and Executive Summary were published in August 2021 following submission of additional input in end June at the ATFP6. The endorsed versions are available on ASEAN website.<sup>1</sup>

## **Outreach & Partnership**

GEC organised two conference sessions at the Virtual IGEM 2021 during Q3. The first session on “*Water Resources Management: Redefining Sustainability*” was held on 23 August while the second on “*GHG emissions from Peatland Management in relation to Malaysia’s commitment under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change*” was held on 30 Sept.

<sup>1</sup> <https://asean.org/book/report-of-the-final-review-of-the-asean-peatland-management-strategy-apms-2006-2020/>  
<https://asean.org/book/executive-summary-of-the-final-review-of-the-asean-peatland-management-strategy-2006-2020/>



The success stories from the UNDP-OA MGF-funded project were showcased at the UNDP Webinar held on 24 Aug 2021 in conjunction with International Day of the Indigenous Peoples.



During Q3, GEC together with coalition partners of the Coalition for the Protection of Selangor Forests (CPSF) and Pertahankan Hutan Simpan Kuala Langat Utara (PHSKLU) Coalition actively campaigned and intensively lobbied via media coverage against the Selangor State Government's degazettement of the Kuala Langat North Forest Reserve (KLNFR) for a mixed development. As a result, the Selangor government was forced to revoke its decision to degazette the forest reserve on 8 Sept.

As at 30 Sept, the Yayasan PETRONAS Walk4Trees tree-planting programme saw the involvement of 22 community groups in setting up nurseries, with 55,863 seedlings prepared and a total of 29,104 saplings planted by community members in 12 sites throughout nine states.

## Visibility

GEC received 62 media coverages between 1 July and 30 September (RCP: 22, FCP: 37, PP: 1, General: 2), with total PR value of RM1,211,247 and cumulative potential reach of 3,351,306 people.



**Planned events**

The following are the planned GEC events and activities from October to December 2021:

Date (TBC)	Venue	Event
4-21 Oct	Muar, Mersing & Kota Tinggi District, Johor	Carry out rapid field assessment of forest reserves to identify peatlands and conduct official meetings with JSFD, key stakeholders and local community.
26 Oct	Sg Kinta Source, Perak	Sg Kinta River Open Classroom River Walk
Oct	Raja Musa Forest Reserve(RMFR)	Planting of 600 saplings of high quality species in order to conduct enrichment planting at Innisfree site
22-30 Oct	Pekan, Pahang	Rapid vegetation assessment in Recovery Project area
23-24 Oct	Pengkalan Kampar Sg Klang , Klang	Launching of Urban River Open Classroom – Sg Klang
25 Oct – 1 Nov	Pekan, Pahang	Field work and on-job training for relevant stakeholders (estate and JPNP) in Pekan, Pahang
31 Oct – 12 Nov	Glasgow, UK	Various events on peatlands during UNFCCC COP26
Oct – Nov	Online / Kuala Kangsar (TBC)	Community training on Product Development and entrepreneurship.
Oct -Dec	Planting sites in 3 states	Walk4Trees tree planting with indigenous people and local communities in various planting sites in 3 states.
Oct -Dec	Sg. Limau, Perak	Planting of 5000 mangrove trees in small scale with community involvement
Oct -Dec	Tebuk Mendeleng, Sabak Bernam, Selangor	Planting of 5000 mangrove trees in small scale with community involvement / SHB KDH
Oct -Dec	Bukit Belata (Ext) Forest Reserve	Construction of 9 units of canal blocks at FC 3 and FC 25, BBEFR
Nov - Dec	Bukit Belata (Ext) Forest Reserve	Planting of 14 ha of degraded area in FC 3, BBEFR