



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SIX COMMUNITIES GATHERED FOR A FORUM ON WETLAND REHABILITATION AND CONSERVATION

Kota Tinggi, 5 August 2022 – Yayasan Sime Darby (YSD) and Global Environment Centre (GEC) hosted a community forum attended by 64 participants from six communities (from Perak, Johor, Kedah, Melaka and Selangor) on 2 to 5 August 2022 in Johor.

Entitled Community-based Wetland Management Forum and Study Tour to Johor, the 4D/3N programme aimed to establish network amongst identified communities involved in wetland rehabilitation and conservation initiatives and empower each other on best management practices as a community-based organisation (CBO).

Johor State Forestry Department Deputy Director, Tuan Abd Ramliza Yahudin Mahli said collaborations and increased awareness among stakeholders including local communities who live near forest reserves and other protection areas, such wildlife reserves, beach or river protections zones. "This further enables and enhances the State Forestry Department's effort in forest conservation, rehabilitation and sustainable wetland resource management planning.

In his speech, he welcomes more CBOs and community groups to work together with the State Forestry Department to implement forest restoration, conservation, protection and rehabilitation activities.

GEC's Director, Faizal Parish believes that community participation is crucial to address environmental issues at global and local scales. Environmental issues are local issues that need to be handled with the participation of all concerned citizens including trained CBOs, at relevant levels. Each trained CBO should have cooperation and access to environmental information held by public authorities and the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes for the common good. "The programme provides a platform for the communities to exchange ideas, experience and knowledge to enhance the management and develop systematic operations of



CBOs and community groups in their efforts to be the eyes and ears of their nearby forests.”

“I am confident that this effort allows wider exposure for the communities to learn from each other and eventually becoming a model community in wetlands conservation and rehabilitation such as mangroves, peat swamp forests and dam areas,” he added.

“YSD is proud to be able to assist GEC to bring together a group of passionate and like-minded individuals through this very meaningful programme, which serves as an effective platform for in-depth sharing and exchange of best practices on successful wetlands ecosystem restoration, as well as management of its operations. Additionally, YSD is optimistic that all the participants and their respective communities will experience greater benefits and success as the programme empowers them with new ideas, skills and knowledge to further build a more resilient and sustainable livelihood,” expressed Dr Hajjah Yatela Zainal Abidin, Chief Executive Officer of YSD.

On the second day of the programme, communities planted 1,000 *Rhizophora mucronata* trees at degraded mangrove area in Tanjung Surat Island and toured the village to learn about the economic potentials that can be developed. On the third day, five community forum sessions on SWOT analysis, managing and administrating CBOs were conducted by GEC as part of the project funded by YSD.

The 4D/3N programme is an initiative under the Community-based Mangrove Conservation and Sustainable Livelihood Programme in Kuala Gula – Kerian and Sitiawan – Manjung, Perak, funded by YSD and implemented by GEC. The six communities who had participated in the programme include:

- i. *Pertubuhan Sahabat Hutan Bakau Kuala Gula* (Perak)
- ii. *Pertubuhan Sahabat Hutan Bakau Pasir Panjang Laut* (Perak)
- iii. *Pertubuhan Sahabat Hutan Bakau Pulau Tanjung Surat* (Johor)
- iv. *Komuniti Bakau Kampung Taman Nilam* (Kedah)
- v. *Komuniti Ayer Pasir* (Melaka)
- vi. *Komuniti Warisan Hutan Sungai Tenggi Selatan* (Selangor)

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About Yayasan Sime Darby (YSD)

Yayasan Sime Darby or Sime Darby Foundation is the philanthropic arm of Sime Darby Plantation Berhad, Sime Darby Berhad, and Sime Darby Property Berhad. Established in 1982, the foundation revolves around five pillars which are Education, Environment, Community & Health, Sports, and Arts & Culture. Led by an independent Governing Council, the foundation is managed by a dedicated team who works closely with the 3 Sime Darby companies in areas of mutual interest. Since its inception, the foundation has expanded its wings from offering scholarships to outstanding and deserving individuals to funding impactful conservation, outreach and development programmes. For more information, visit www.yayasansimedarby.com

About Global Environment Centre (GEC)

Global Environment Centre 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, building partnerships for the environment. 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. It focuses on a community-based approach to natural resource management and environmental protection and has worked with thousands of community members and volunteers to support action in Malaysia and throughout Southeast Asia. For more information on the Global Environment Centre please visit www.gec.org.my

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