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# Forest Custodians

**T**HE first tree was planted here in 1923. Today, there are about 10 million trees spread over 486 hectares in Kepong. It began as a forestry research institute but today is a living museum comprising of arboreta and a botanical garden.

This is the site of the Forest Research Institute of Malaysia (FRIM), the country's premier research and development centre for forestry.

The Director-General of FRIM, Datuk Dr Abd Latif Mohmod points out that what happens in a forest has far reaching repercussions - from water quality, ecosystem, biodiversity and climate change.

In its bid to do the best for the Malaysian forest, FRIM plans and implements forestry and forest-related research and development (R&D) projects. It studies, compiles and disseminates research information to ensure sustainable management of forests and the natural resources. It encourages research networking and collaborative R&D with various national as well as international bodies, covering conservation, biotechnology, herbal products, forest biodiversity management

and promotion of R&D output commercialisation.

FRIM conducts studies on water quality, impact of ecotourism on forests, as well as research on how the forest contributes to climate change. It also offers satellite image and aerial photo interpretation, digital and forest mapping, species identification, analysis and testing services. Some of the more technical services include study of wood preservatives, fire door testing and panel product testing.

Additionally, the institute has wide-ranging expertise, from EIA studies, forest harvesting standards to specifications for wood and wood-based products.

FRIM also conducts research in eight research stations in different types of forests located in various parts of the country. The field research covers lowland dipterocarp forest, teak and pine, hydrology, ecology, physiology, soil science, silviculture, bamboo, medicinal plants and afforestation (the study of converting bare, cultivated or ex-mining area into forested land).

FRIM is now looking at new business opportunities by providing environmental services aside from timber and forest products,

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— Abd Latif

says Abd Latif. The institute encourages the protection of intellectual property rights of research findings, the development of techniques and products resulting from its research.

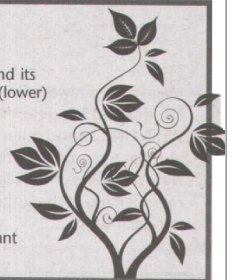
In addition, the institute provides guidelines to determine the quality, efficacy and toxicity of herbal products from the Malaysian forest. Its ultimate goal is to become an accreditation and certification body for forest management systems and forest-related products.

"If FRIM can be seen as a success story of the greatness of a man-made forest, then we would become an example, a model for the rest of the world," says Abd Latif proudly. FRIM is certainly doing its part in ensuring that Malaysia practices sustainable forestry.

For more details, log on to: [www.frim.gov.my](http://www.frim.gov.my) or contact FRIM at 03-6279 7000 / 6279 7677.

## INTERESTING FACTS

- The temperature difference in FRIM and its surroundings is up to 3 degrees Celsius (lower) due to the large forest cover within the institute.
- The area that is now FRIM was once tin mining and vegetable farming site.
- There are 2,500 species of plants in the campus and forest area of FRIM
- FRIM is one of the largest and significant carbon stocks in the Kuala Lumpur area.



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## Among services offered by FRIM



Training – sustainable natural and planted forest management, plant identification, commercial plant nursery establishment and propagation techniques, landscape and tree management, general techniques on tissue culture, herbal technology development, reduced impact harvesting, Graphic Information System (GIS) and remote sensing application, nature guide and interpretation courses.

Wood product development including R&D work on timber design and construction, quality control processes and furniture testing.

Herbal Technology – providing consultation and other services from post-harvesting, extraction, milling, finished products to quality control.

Tissue culture laboratory services – contract R&D protocol development, plant production and consultancies in plant tissue culture techniques, laboratory design and construction, laboratory management and training, weaning systems (for tissue culture plants).

Timber ID services, plant identification, consultancy on EIA preparation, timber testing against termites, control and management of pest and diseases.