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Yayasan Sabah FMUs first to receive US verification

KOTA KINABALU: Yayasan Sabah Group's Forest Management Units (FMUs) 15 and 16 (188,610 hectares) in the Sungai Pinangah Forest Reserve on May 26, this year became the first in Sabah to receive the Verification of Legal Compliance (VLC) from the Rainforest Alliance of New York under its Smartwood Programme. The award is a major step towards full certification under the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Gold standard.

The Smartwood Programme provides verification services to forest management enterprises that produce timber and companies that sell timber or other forest products.

A statement issued by Yayasan Sabah's Corporate Communications Division, today, said the verifications are based on protocols and standards developed and managed directly by The Rainforest Alliance.

Verification of Legal Compliance for Yayasan Sabah's FMU 15 and 16 is the second step towards achieving full Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Certification.

Among others the VLC is an assessment and verification that timber or non-timber forest products have complied with all laws applicable to forest harvesting in the country of origin, it said.

The protocol towards achieving full FSC Certification is to first achieve the Verification of Legal Origin (VLO) to be followed by Verification of Legal Compliance (VLC) and Controlled Wood.

Yayasan Sabah FMUs 15 and 16 received Smartwood Standard for Verification of Legal Origin (VLO), Sabah, Malaysia on Feb 13, 2008.

The Rainforest Alliance of New York is a member of the Environmental Audit Committee (EAC) that is working with Yayasan Sabah's Innoprise Corporation Sdn Bhd and the Forest Research Institute of Malaysia (FRIM) to come up with the EAC

Protocol to fulfil the 1992 Reduced Impact Logging (RIL) contract between the New England Power Company of Boston, Massachusetts, USA and Yayasan Sabah.

The Forest Certification is a protocol that reviews on-the-ground forest practices against standards that addresses environmental, social and economic issues.

It provides for an independent, third party review attesting as to how effectively current management maintains forest health and productivity, and conducts periodic re-verification and re-certification of the forest, the statement said.—Bernama