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Addressing green issues

Two tree-planting ceremonies mark conservation of forest ecosystems

FOR over two decades, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) and Mitsubishi Corporation (MC) have collaborated in research activities to address environmental issues related to global climate change.

Recognising the importance of conserving the world's forest ecosystems and in accordance with the United Nations' designation of 2011 as the "International Year of Forests", UPM and MC are holding three integrated forest conservation activities this month.

The first two activities are tree-planting ceremonies. The first one was held at UPM's Bintulu Sarawak campus recently while the other tree-planting ceremony at UPM's Serdang campus will be held this Sunday.

These will be followed by the International Symposium on Rehabilitation of Tropical Rainforest Ecosystems 2011 on Oct 24 and 25.

The tree-planting ceremony at UPM's Bintulu Sarawak campus was attended by over 400 staff and students who planted various tree species indigenous to Borneo.

Students from Universiti Brunei Darussalam as well as several government officers residing in Bintulu joined the event.

The second tree-planting ceremony to be held at UPM's Serdang campus will see 6,000 seedlings being planted over a 0.6ha area.

The seedlings comprised 12 species native to Peninsular Malaysia, including endemic and endangered species.

The location for this second ceremony will be at UPM's Arboretum forest model site, which was previously the university's grazing field, located between the Kuala Lumpur-Seremban and Kuala Lumpur Putrajaya highway.

A total of 600 volunteers made up of UPM staff and students, Mitsubishi staff as well as secondary school students will participate in the planting of saplings.

The proceedings will be led by UPM's Vice-Chancellor Datuk Dr Radin Umar Radin Sohadi, and Mitsubishi Corporation senior executive vice-president Hideyuki Nabeshima.

The event will also be attended by the symposium's international participants coming from countries such as China, Japan, Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia, Australia, Germany, the United States and Brazil.

The main objective of this project is to develop a model forest planted with a combination of local as well as endemic species collected from across Peninsular Malaysia.

The estimated number of total species planted once the project is completed is around 400 species of timber, endemic species, herbs

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and other medicinal plants.

The planting density will be three seedlings per one square metre.

The high density is naturally adapted to the density in natural forests of Peninsular Malaysia.

Symposium chairman, Prof Datuk Dr Nik Muhamad Nik Ab. Majid, also professor at the Faculty of Forestry UPM said that the international symposium was to discuss research findings on issues relating to the conservation of tropical forest ecosystems.

This event will be held at the Royale Chulan Kuala Lumpur.

"The symposium will welcome 300 participants including scientists from UPM, other local universities as well as the Forestry Department, Wildlife Department, Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM).

Members of the public will also be invited to join in the first day of the symposium on Oct 24 to attend the opening ceremonies, the research poster presentations, and the country/institutional reports," he said.

Deputy Tourism Minister Datuk Dr James Dawos Mamit will launch both the tree-planting ceremony in Serdang and the symposium.

The keynote address will be delivered by one of the pioneers of UPM-Mitsubishi collaboration project, Dr Akira Miyawaki from the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES-JISE), Japan.



Planting trees: Volunteers made up of university staff and students, Mitsubishi staff as well as secondary school students are involved in the planting of saplings.