

Headline	Programmes to save sentang wood industry drawn up		
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# Programmes to save *sentang* wood industry drawn up

**KOTA BAHARU:** The Action Committee for the Rehabilitation of Rivers, Trees and Environment Malaysia is drawing up programmes to save the *sentang* tree (*melia excelsa*) from neglect.

Its Chairman Mohd Noor Ibrahim said the move would also help *sentang* tree entrepreneurs and provide a source of revenue through the export of *sentang* wood.

"Among the programmes launched is the collection of signatures from *sentang* tree growers to urge the government to save the sector," he told Bernama here, yesterday.

Quoting a figure from the Forest Research Institute of Malaysia, he said, about 3.5 million *sentang* trees were cultivated all over the country.

"*Sentang* tree planters

stand to lose about RM10 billion if nothing is done to help the industry," he said.

Mohd Noor said the *sentang* tree planting campaign was launched by the then Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad in 1997.

The *sentang* tree is almost similar to jati and nyatoh and is estimated to cost RM3,500 per tonne. It could be exported as sawn wood.

"It could also be used as a raw material for furniture, wood carvings and door frames," he said.

A memorandum has been submitted to the Prime Minister's Department and the Ministry of Plantation Industries and Commodities urging the government to encourage the use of *sentang* wood including as a construction material. - Bernama