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GOING GREEN: Dr Abdul Latif (right) greets foreign participants of the International Symposium on Reclamation, Rehabilitation and Restoration Towards a Greener Asia. — Bernama photo

Uggah: Malaysia committed to making earth a greener place

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia continues to join the region's efforts in making the earth a greener place through the rehabilitation and restoration of its forests and their functions, said Natural Resources and Environment Minister Datuk Seri Douglas Uggah Embas.

He said that 33,015ha of forest had been restored by the Forestry Department of Peninsular Malaysia through enrichment planting of indigenous tree species since the 1970's until 2010.

"This excludes an area of 101,069ha of planted forest established in the Permanent Forest Estates with selected exotic timber tree species,"

Uggah said when opening the International Symposium of Reclamation, Rehabilitation and Restoration Towards a Greener Asia yesterday.

The text of his speech was read out by Forest Research Institute Malaysia (Frim) director-general Datuk Dr Abd Latif Mohmod.

The symposium was organised by Frim with support from the Asia Pacific Association of Forestry Research Institutions and Korea Forest Research Institute.

Uggah said that the government had also launched the rehabilitation and conservation programme for planting of mangroves and other suitable

species along the coastlines after the 2004 tsunami.

Under the programme, a total of 5,516ha of areas exposed to coastal erosion had been restored between 2006 and 2010, the minister said.

He added that a 50,020ha area in Tangkulap and Sungai Pinang Forest Reserves in Sabah had been proposed for restoration efforts through the planting of trees and restoring degraded forests.

The two-day event draws 60 participants comprising experts, academicians, and researchers from 16 countries to share scientific knowledge, findings and experience to improve understanding in restoration of ecology. — Bernama