

Headline	Uggah calls for more indigenous trees to be planted in urban areas		
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# Uggah calls for more indigenous trees to be planted in urban areas

BY HARUN JAU

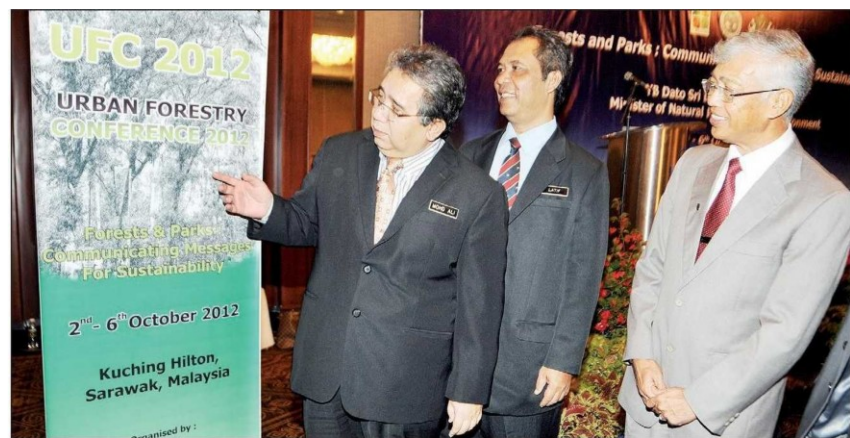
**KUCHING:** More initiatives will be introduced to encourage the planting of more suitable indigenous species of trees in urban areas instead of ornamental plants, said Natural Resources and Environment Minister Dato Sri Douglas Uggah Embas.

He said urban forests and parks would need to be managed just as natural forests because they too were valuable heritage which could be passed on to future generations.

“To make the most of our precious urban green resources, a strategic approach to the planning and management of urban green areas is crucial as it is multi and cross-sectored, involving various stakeholders and authorities either at the local or federal level.

“A holistic approach involving legislation, planning, design and management is needed in dealing with urban green resources. A comprehensive green structure planning requires an understanding of relationship between urban green spaces and other functional urban spaces,” said Uggah, whose text of speech was read by Deputy Secretary-General of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Dato’ Dr Mohd Ali Mohamad Nor at the official opening of Urban Forestry Conference 2012 “Forests and Parks: Communicating Messages for Sustainability” Hilton Kuching, here yesterday.

The conference was jointly organised by the Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM), Kuching North City Hall (DBKU), Sarawak



**DATO’** Dr Mohd Ali (left) showing the Urban Forestry Conference banner to Datuk Abang Abdul Wahap (right) as Dato’ Dr Abdul Latif looks on after the opening ceremony of Urban Forestry Conference 2012 at Hilton Kuching. PHOTO: RAMIDI SUBARI

Forestry Corporation (SFC), Sarawak Convention Bureau (SCB), International Union of Forest Research Organisations (IUFRO) and International Federation of Parks and Recreation Administration (IFPRA).

Uggah stressed that in the quest for development, Malaysia had not neglected its commitments and responsibilities to protect the environment as well as to ensure sustainable development of natural resources.

He pointed out that sustainability issues had now become a concern, especially in view of environment degradation faced by modern cities and metropolitans worldwide.

He said this was particularly true in developing countries like Malaysia which was gearing towards becoming a developed and high-income nation.

Uggah revealed that as of June this

year, nationwide tree-planting campaign had successfully planted 28.8 million trees throughout Malaysia since its launch in 2010, surpassing the initial target of 26 million trees by 2014.

He also called for the tree-planting campaign to be extended to all cities like Kuching and in other states, especially the planting of more suitable indigenous species in the respective places.

The campaign, he said, was in line with the government’s efforts to ensure that at least 50 per cent of the country had forest cover, in accordance with Malaysia’s commitment made at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992.

Also present at the opening ceremony were the DBKU Mayor Datuk Haji Abang Abdul Wahab Abang Julai and FRIM Director-General Dato’ Dr Abdul Latif Mohmod.