

Headline	Of MICE and carbon offsetting		
MediaTitle	The Star (Kuching)		
Date	25 Nov 2014	Color	Full Color
Section	NEWS	Circulation	9,905
Page No	7,8	Readership	29,715
Language	English	ArticleSize	1211 cm ²
Journalist	LIM WING HOOI	AdValue	RM 16,176
Frequency	Daily (EM)	PR Value	RM 48,528



Of MICE and carbon offsetting

Convention bureau leads the way in efforts to reduce effects of carbon dioxide

By LIM WING HOOI
winghooi@thestar.com.my



LAST year, the Air Transport Action Group (ATAG) noted that commercial aircraft produced about 700 million tonnes of carbon dioxide, representing about 2% of CO₂ produced from all human activities.

The Geneva-based not-for-profit association that represents all sectors of the air transport industry also said that 80% of the CO₂ produced from aviation came from flights over 1,500km where there is no practical alternative mode of transport.

With globalisation reaching new heights, air travel is growing. The

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change predicted early in the 20th century that annual aircraft emissions would exceed a billion tonnes by 2050.

As most international conferences draw hundreds, if not thousands, of participants, with the bulk of them usually travelling by plane, it is only prudent to do something to address the emissions produced in the process.

Understanding the importance of the matter, Malaysia Convention

and Exhibition Bureau (MyCEB) chief executive officer Zulkefli Sharif said since the establishment of MyCEB in 2010, the organisation had planned tree-planting activities to help reduce the carbon footprint of those attending conventions and exhibi-

tions while promoting awareness on the need to reduce CO₂ emissions in daily activities.

The non-profit organisation established by the Tourism Ministry to strengthen Malaysia's business tourism brand in the international meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions (MICE) market launched the Malaysia Business Tourism Green Programme on Nov 9, 2010 in conjunction with the 18th World Congress of Accountants (WCOA) that year.

The congress for accountants, apart from the usual business and accounting issues, also focused on several issues related to environmental sustainability, such as

> TURN TO NEXT PAGE

A total of 1,972 trees planted to-date under campaign

> FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

climate-change reporting and emissions trading.

"As part of the conference registration process, participants were given the option to contribute a minimum of US\$10 (RM33) towards the programme. It would be used for tree planting activities in collaboration with Forest Research Institute of Malaysia (FRIM)," he told *Metrobiz*.

Six hundred trees were then planted.

To determine how many trees needed to be planted, he said MyCEB used an event and conference carbon footprint calculator.

"From the calculator, we will be able to estimate on the number of trees to be purchased for this purpose. Trees are chosen as a carbon offset because trees reverse the impact of land degradation and provide food, energy and income, helping communities to achieve long-term economic and environmental sustainability," he said.

A CO₂ calculator was used to calculate one's carbon footprint from

activities such as air travel.

For event organisers, a wider range of criteria was used with the same calculator. The calculations take into consideration things such as the number of people, their travelling distance to and from a conference venue to the source of electricity of their accommodation.

MyCEB doesn't stop at just tree planting alone, but also looked into other areas, from water bottles to paper printing.

Re-useable water bottles were given out to 6,000 delegates from 134 countries to replace plastic water bottles. It was estimated that 100,000 plastic water bottles were eliminated for that one event assuming each person were to consume four bottles of water per conference day.

Thumb drives were also provided for delegates to download presentations instead of printing out the presentations.

The local host, Malaysian Institute of Accountants (MIA) also encouraged delegates to use the Express Rail Link from the Kuala Lumpur International Airport to the city

centre and vice-versa on return journeys.

The tree-planting campaign has steadily gained momentum with 1,972 trees planted to-date.

The delegates from 18 conferences have participated in tree plantings since the launch of the programme.

This year, more than 100 trees were planted as part of the "Let's Meet and Green Special Carbon Offset Programme" organised in conjunction with the 25th International Federation of Surveyors Congress (XXV FIG Congress) 2014 in Kuala Lumpur.

More than 3,000 surveyors and land professionals from 99 nations planted Malaysian hardwood tree species, such as chengal, meranti and also some fruit trees at FRIM.

FRIM director-general Datuk Dr Abdul Latif Mohmod said the institute had been active in carbon offset programmes, with 28 tree plantings events performed last year alone.

Similar programmes have been put in place by KLM-Royal Dutch Airlines and the funds from car-

Headline	Of MICE and carbon offsetting		
MediaTitle	The Star (Kuching)		
Date	25 Nov 2014	Color	Full Color
Section	NEWS	Circulation	9,905
Page No	7,8	Readership	29,715
Language	English	ArticleSize	1211 cm²
Journalist	LIM WING HOOI	AdValue	RM 16,176
Frequency	Daily (EM)	PR Value	RM 48,528

bon offsetting has contributed to reforestation programmes in Africa. He added that Malaysia Airlines (MAS) had also embarked on a Voluntary Carbon Offset Scheme but unfortunately, the programme has been suspended due to the on-going changes taking place in the management of MAS.

Malaysian company Bumi Armada Bhd has committed to conserve the carbon stored in a 5ha prime forest area within FRIM for a period of five years.

FRIM has 544ha of land in Kepong allocated for similar carbon offset programmes.

Abdul Latif said there were nine more areas across the country, including Johor, Kelantan and Terengganu, covering about 2,000ha

available for similar programmes.

"We will usually select endangered species for these programmes.

During the recent 25th FIG Congress 2014 in Kuala Lumpur, about 60 out of 120 endangered species were planted by the conference participants," he said.

He added that about 1,000 trees could be planted on 1ha of land and most of the funds collected are for maintenance purposes, including replacing dead trees with commercial value.

To assess the effectiveness of the planting programme, he said generally, from the initial planting density of 1,000 trees per hectare, there should be a final crop of 300 to 400 surviving trees with an average

diameter at breast height (a standard method of expressing the diameter of the trunk of a standing tree) of 30cm or more.

"For carbon sequestration, a forest plantation is projected to absorb four to six tonnes of carbon per hectare per year.

"Generally, half of the weight of the tree will consist of carbon, and it keeps increasing. Imagine a 10-year-old tree (depending on species) having the ability of storing up to 500kg of carbon," he said.

And while doing this, the forest continues to produce a commodity taken for granted — oxygen.

"Calculations had shown that 40 trees will ensure sufficient oxygen for one person throughout his/her lifetime," he said.

- ❶ A general view of Royal Dutch Airways (KLM) aircraft at Schiphol airport near Amsterdam. The airline's carbon offsetting programme has contributed to re-forestation efforts in Africa. — EPA
- ❷ (From left) Zulkefli Sharif, Authorised Land Surveyors Malaysia Association president Mohammad Azmi Mohd Zin, Dr Abdul Latif and International Federation of Surveyors vice-president Prof Dr Rudolf Staiger (squatting) planting a tree in FRIM as part of a carbon offsetting effort earlier this year.
- ❸ Conference participants are encouraged to use trains to help reduce their carbon footprint.



(From left) A filepic of Abd Latif, Zulkefli, and the organisers of the International Internal Auditors International Conference at the tree-planting event organised in conjunction with the conference that saw 3,000 internal auditors from around the world attending.

Headline	Of MICE and carbon offsetting		
MediaTitle	The Star (Kuching)		
Date	25 Nov 2014	Color	Full Color
Section	NEWS	Circulation	9,905
Page No	7,8	Readership	29,715
Language	English	ArticleSize	1211 cm²
Journalist	LIM WING HOOI	AdValue	RM 16,176
Frequency	Daily (EM)	PR Value	RM 48,528



Headline	Of MICE and carbon offsetting		
MediaTitle	The Star (Kuching)		
Date	25 Nov 2014	Color	Full Color
Section	NEWS	Circulation	9,905
Page No	7,8	Readership	29,715
Language	English	ArticleSize	1211 cm²
Journalist	LIM WING HOOI	AdValue	RM 16,176
Frequency	Daily (EM)	PR Value	RM 48,528

