

Headline	941,801 ha gazetted for TPAs		
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941, 801 ha gazetted for TPAs

KUCHING: A total of 941,801 hectares have been gazetted by the government as Totally Protected Areas (TPAs) comprising 37 national parks, 14 nature reserves, and five wildlife sanctuaries.

Second Minister of Urban Development and Natural Resources Datuk Amar Haji Awang Tengah Ali Hasan (*pic*) said the Government targeted to gazette a total of one million TPAs by 2020.

"Besides, the Government has also established cross border cooperation with Brunei and Indonesia through the Heart of Borneo Initiative (HoB) which aims to preserve and develop the areas concerned based on the principles of sustainable development in line with the development agendas of the respective countries," he said in his winding-up speech in the august house yesterday.

Tengah disclosed HoB areas in the State covered an area of 2.1 million hectares stretching from Batang Ai to Lawas.

The State Government, he said also proposed to extend further the

HoB area to complete the Totally Protected Area Conservation Corridor which will connect areas from Batang Ai to Tanjung Datu National Park.

He said the Government had also introduced the open door policy to researchers and foreign research institutions to carry out scientific forestry studies with the establishment of special platform known as RIMBA SARAWAK (Research for Intensified Management of Bio-Rich Areas of Sarawak) with allocation totalling RM10.4 million.

Tengah said at the moment, 11 renowned institutions such as Singapore Botanical Garden, Smithsonian Institute of USA, Royal Botanical Garden Edinburgh (UK) and National Institute of Environmental Studies Japan, had established smart collaboration with Sarawak Forestry Corporation under the RIMBA SARAWAK Initiative.

Sarawak Forestry Department also established collaboration with a number of universities and international research institutes such

as in United Kingdom, Denmark, United States and 11 universities in Japan.

Collaborations with corporate bodies as well as local institutions of higher learning were also fostered with all forestry agencies in the region.

Among others are the BEACON Project (Biodiversity, Environment and Conservation) a RM10 million collaboration to conserve, generate, protect and enhance marine biodiversity in Similajau National Park and Bintulu waters; The Petronas-Sarawak Forestry Eco-Marine Project costing RM8 million to protect the Miri-Sibuti Coral Reef National Park including its marine life and habitats; The Solar Electrification Project at Tanjung Datu and Talang-Satang National Parks costing RM5 million in collaboration with Sarawak Energy Berhad; The planting of mangrove along the coastal area in collaboration with Petronas, Shell, Fujixerox and others; Rehabilitation of degraded area with Japan-Malaysia Association (JMA); and



Development of bamboo industry with Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM), International Network Bamboo and Rattan (INBAR), Centre of Anji Bamboo Research and Design (CABRD) China.