

Headline	Summit discusses Belum's survival		
MediaTitle	New Straits Times		
Date	28 Sep 2018	Color	Full Color
Section	Local News	Circulation	36,278
Page No	15	Readership	108,834
Language	English	ArticleSize	408 cm ²
Journalist	N/A	AdValue	RM 14,010
Frequency	Daily	PR Value	RM 42,030



BRAINS 2018

Summit discusses Belum's survival

PULAU BANDING: The recently-concluded Belum Rainforest Summit 2018, or Brains 2018, saw more than 80 delegates, comprising researchers, conservationists, local communities and government representatives discussing issues affecting the survival and sustainable use of the Belum-Temengor rainforest complex (BTRC), which, at 130 million years old, is one of the oldest virgin rainforest complexes.

The summit was closed by Perak state Education, Technology, Science and Environment Committee chairman Dr Abdul Aziz Bari after four days of discussions, debates, tree-planting sessions and visits to BTRC.

Brains 2018 was organised by the non-profit Pulau Banding Foundation (PBF), with the help of conservation non-governmental organisations, such as the state government, Malaysian Nature Society (MNS), World Wide Fund for Nature Malaysia, Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM) and Emkay Group, a sustainable prop-

erty developer here.

This year's conference marks a new milestone for Brains as representatives from the federal and state governments joined the discussions. A summit for young people, Voices of Youth, was held in conjunction with Brains 2018. Its delegates participated in the main summit and delivered their resolution.

Government agencies included the Forestry and Wildlife and National Parks Departments, and FRIM. Present were representatives from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia's Institute of Ethnic Studies and Institute of Climate Change, and other local universities. Other participating organisations included the Northern Corridor Implementation Authority and the Management and Ecology of Malaysian Elephants of the University of Nottingham.

The theme for Brains 2018 was "Forest Biodiversity and Community: A Balanced Approach for Sustainable Development". It focused on how to make use of BTRC's re-

sources in a sustainable manner to benefit stakeholders while not neglecting the importance of wildlife conservation.

Topics — such as new directions for ecotourism, payment for ecosystem services and REDD+ — were discussed. Action plans to combat illegal activities, such as poaching, were highlighted as these affect the survivability of BTRC.

PBF chief executive officer Datuk Dr Abdul Rashid Abdul Malik said: "All parties with a stake in Belum-Temengor must do their part to ensure the survival of the rainforest."

"Research and conservation organisations such as WWF-Malaysia and MNS are actively promoting the rainforest's importance, and other groups such as Yayasan Emkay have been reaching out to local indigenous communities. But if we are to see any improvement in BTRC's conservation efforts, stricter enforcement of laws is needed. The federal and state governments must play a larger role in eradicating illegal logging and

Headline	Summit discusses Belum's survival		
MediaTitle	New Straits Times		
Date	28 Sep 2018	Color	Full Color
Section	Local News	Circulation	36,278
Page No	15	Readership	108,834
Language	English	ArticleSize	408 cm ²
Journalist	N/A	AdValue	RM 14,010
Frequency	Daily	PR Value	RM 42,030



A delegate of Voices of Youth reciting the pledge for nature at the Belum Rainforest Summit 2018 recently.

poaching, both of which are BTRC's major concerns."

Emkay group executive director Ahmad Khalif Mustapha Kamal, a trustee of PBF, said: "The summit is not only about bringing researchers and academicians together for a conference. It has always been about action and preparing for the future.

"To that end, I am pleased that government agencies like Perhilitan and the Forestry Department were present because we need their involvement to protect BTRC. Having delegates from Voices of Youth reminded us that as the next generation to inherit the country, their recommendations for envi-

ronmental sustainability must be taken seriously."

The foundation welcomed representatives from the University of Copenhagen, Institut Teknologi Vale, University of Leicester, Universiti Malaysia Kelantan and AIMST University, all part of a shared project titled the Malaysian Rainforest Genome Ontology to exchange research documents and foster stronger collaborative ties.

PBF is a non-profit organisation that promotes, preserves and performs studies on tropical rainforests as well as maintain the sustainability of BTRC landscape, environment and communities through research and ecotourism.