Forest plantations urged to invest in R&D on pests, diseases

KUCHING: Globally, pests and diseases have caused many forest plantations to fail, calling for greater investment in new technologies and capacity building in planted forest R&D to forestall the devastations that can be brought by these threats.

This was the central message delivered to participants at the “Pest and Disease” workshop held here on Monday. Driving home this point was world-renowned tree health expert and president of IUFRO (International Union of Forest Research Organisations), Professor Michael J. Wingfield.

The workshop was part of the Planted Forest Research Programme (PFRP) implemented by Sarawak Forestry Corporation (SFC) to facilitate the establishment of planted forests in Sarawak.

Wingfield, in his keynote address at the workshop, elaborated on the need to develop tolerant planting materials and research expertise to ensure the viability and sustainability of forest plantations.

Also presenting the papers at the SFC workshop were researchers from Forest Research Institute of Malaysia (FRIM), major timber companies and government agencies from Sabah and Sarawak.

The Pest and Disease workshop was attended by 50 participants.
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The participants of the "Pest and Disease" workshop posing with president of IUFRO (International Union of Forest Research Organisations), Professor Michael J. Wingfield (seated fourth left) and Sarawak Forestry Corporation's CEO, Wong Ting Chung (seated third right).