



MEDIA RELEASE

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IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE INTERNATIONAL BIODIVERSITY DAY 2023

CONSERVATION PROJECTS BY MPOGCF ARE IN LINE WITH INTERNATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The United Nations (UN) proclaimed May 22 as the International Day for Biological Diversity to increase understanding and awareness of biodiversity issues among the world's population.

The theme for this year is 'From Agreement to Action: Build Back Biodiversity.'

This theme is in line with activities to conserve biodiversity by the Malaysian Palm Oil Green Conservation Foundation (MPOGCF), a leading green conservation agency under the Ministry of Plantations and Commodities.

Since April 2021, MPOGCF has collaborated with various federal and state government agencies, local governments, non-government agencies, and industry players to conserve degraded forests, reforestation, and rehabilitation of wildlife habitat.

The conservation projects by MPOGCF are in line with international organizations' recommendations, including the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FOA), that conservation is the best practise to protect flora and fauna while also improving the quality of life for the local communities.

The One Million Trees Planting Project aims to recover 2,500 hectares of degraded area in Lower Kawah, Lahad Datu, and the rehabilitation of orangutan habitats while simultaneously benefiting local communities in Kampung Tampenau who supply planting materials and job opportunities related to conservation, such as tree planting

and maintenance.

From October 2021 to April 2023, we planted about 100,000 trees from 12 species on 225 hectares of covered area at a cost of RM1.1 million.

MPOGCF also collaborates with Kuala Terengganu City Council (MBKT) in developing abandoned mines in the city centre into a Conservation and Biodiversity Education Park that benefits research and higher education institutions, and increase awareness of biodiversity among the public.

A variety of trees were planted, particularly of endangered species, with the palm oil industry through MPOGCF funding RM1 million for the project.

MPOGCF is also in collaboration with Sime Darby Plantations in the development of the peatland rehabilitation model in Lavang Estate in Bintulu, Sarawak, comprising a total covered area of 400 hectares.

For this project, MPOGCF is funding RM1.5 million for the planting of 300,000 seedlings in an area of 50 hectares from the total area to rehabilitate the natural ecosystem.

These projects also offer local communities an opportunity for additional income.

Agreements were also signed between MPOGCF and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), and Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) with allocations of RM600,000 and RM450,000 each to fund two research studies on biodiversity in oil palm plantations in Peninsular Malaysia and Sarawak.

Some other high-impact project agreements for the industry that are still being finalized include the Population Survey of Orangutans and Borneo Elephants in Sabah, the Napier Grass Planting to Conserve Borneo Elephants at the Wildlife Corridor in Sandakan, the Elephant Corridor Project in Jeli, Kelantan, and the Conservation of the Degraded Forest in the Centre Forest Spine (CFS).

It cannot be denied that the oil palm plantation sector has a high impact on biodiversity loss, but it should be remembered that these are considerably less than those seen in the mining sector and livestock expansion, as the plantations sector replaces trees with trees, and high impacts occur only at the outset of tree planting.

After a few years and with closed monitoring under Malaysian Sustainable Palm Oil (MSPO) certification, the oil palm trees create an ecosystem for flora, fauna, and

microorganisms.

Many organizations with their own agendas purposely forget the fact that oil palm is a commodity plant for economic benefit, but a tree is a tree, and trees provide natural oxygen to a diversity of life, including humans.

We are confident that the conservation initiatives will help the country protect biodiversity and the continuity of the Malaysian palm oil industry in a global market.

Happy International Biodiversity Day from MPOGCF!

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