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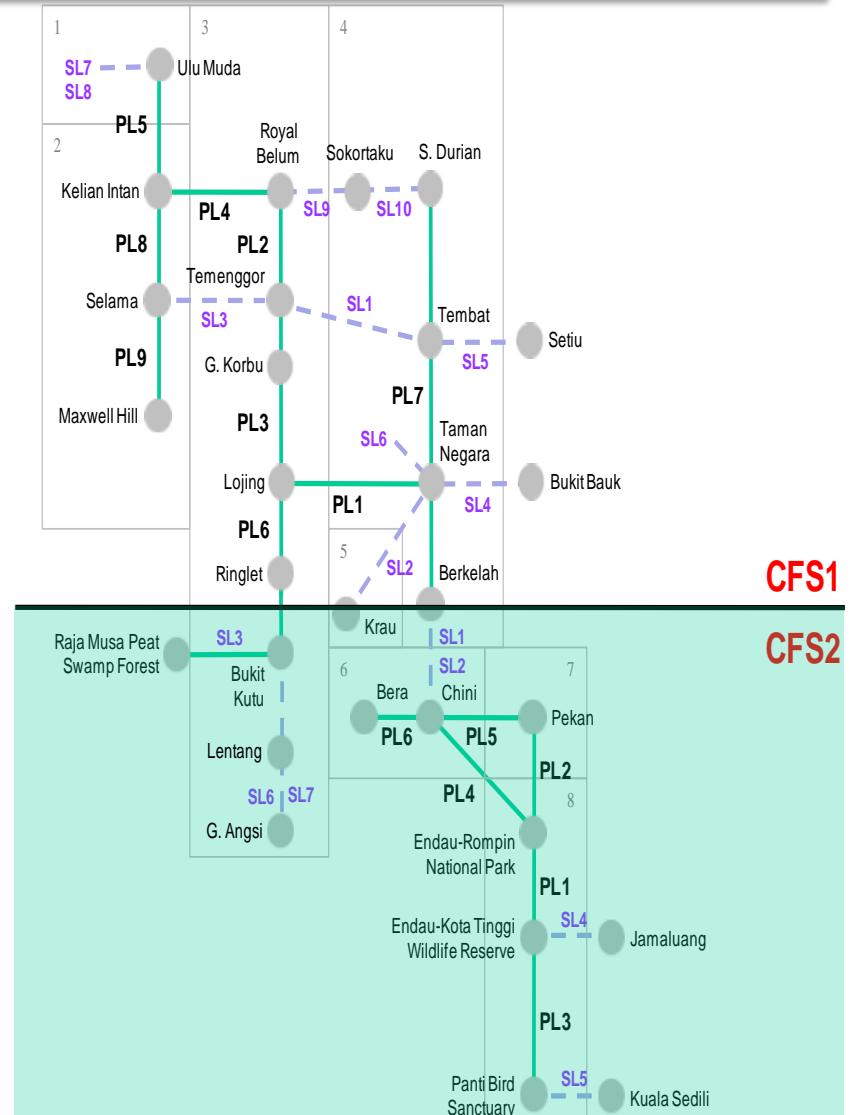
UNDP/GEF-GOM project Improving Connectivity in the Central Forest Spine (CFS) Landscape - IC-CFS

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UNDP Malaysia

CBD COP12 Oct 2014

BACKGROUND ON CFS PROJECT



BACKGROUND ON CFS PROJECT

- **The Central Forest Spine Master Plan (CFS) will link up 4 major forest complexes in Peninsular Malaysia with a network of ecological or green corridors to create one contiguous, forested wildlife sanctuary.**
- **Conceptualized in 2005 under the first National Physical Plan (NPP)**
- **Tabled jointly by Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment(NRE) and the Ministry of Housing and Local Government in 2011 to the Cabinet.**
- **10th Malaysia Plan : efforts to protect biodiversity and habitats will be strengthened with the implementation of the Central Forest Spine of 4.3 million ha**
- **UNDP and Government of Malaysia signed the Project Document in Mar 2014**

CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CFS MP

1. Inadequate framework for planning, compliance monitoring and enforcement for integrated forest landscape management:

Environmental governance system and legal obligation - Federal-State jurisdiction and motivation for land allocation and management

Mainstreaming of biodiversity into development planning - Land use and management decisions are made with insufficient consideration to biodiversity, ecosystem services attributes, carbon accounting and ecological linkages

Capacity for monitoring compliance to plans for sustainable landscape management as part of the CFSMP - As CFS unit within JPSM and the National CFS Steering and Technical Committees

Budget for the CFSMP - lack of automatic annual budget allocated for its implementation at state level

Effective system to deal with human-wildlife conflict - HWC prevention and response systems are in place but capacity and resources for their implementation is inadequate

Resources for wildlife and forestry crime law enforcement - Resources are lacking in forestry and wildlife departments for sufficient patrolling of forests for both poaching of wildlife and illegal harvesting of forest resources.

CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CFS MP

2. Limited experience among key government and civil society stakeholders in implementing sustainable forest landscapes management on the ground:

Institutional knowledge of biodiversity

Lack of evidence based and scientific methods for decisions and capacity

State and local level capacity for implementing sustainable landscape management.

Landscape level biodiversity management is a relatively new concept and lack of coordination amongst agencies, capacity building and training is required for long term coordinated and effective management of the CFS.

Land tenure rights of indigenous communities.

Orang Asli utilise forest resources for both subsistence needs and as a source of income, but most communities do not have legal ownership of their land and thus are likely to lack the sense of ownership



CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CFS MP

3. Lack of incentive and political will to implement the CFSMP:

Valuation of ecosystem services.

The ecosystem services provided by the CFS, and their economic values, are not fully appreciated and are not reflected in policies, market and prices.

No mechanisms to compensate for utilisation of land for conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services.

The CFSMP does not contain any mechanisms through which the landholder may benefit from his compliance to the plan, thus, no financial incentive at the local level to manage land for biodiversity and ecosystem conservation enhance connectivity.

Lack experience of PES schemes.

Although there has been a growing interest in the establishment of PES schemes in the country, it is a relatively new concept and just one mechanism has been established to date.

Provincial policy and regulatory framework.

Policy and fiscal instrument support to land and resource activities in and around forests is still very much focused on extractive industries and commercial activities.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND COMPONENTS

To secure the critical wildlife habitats, conserve biodiversity and maintain continuous flow of multiple ecosystem services through sustainable land and forest management in the *Central Forest Spine* (CFS) landscape.

- i. Planning, Compliance Monitoring and Enforcement Framework for Integrated Forest Landscape Management**
- ii. Sustainable Landscape Management**
- iii. Diversification of Financing Sources for Conservation**

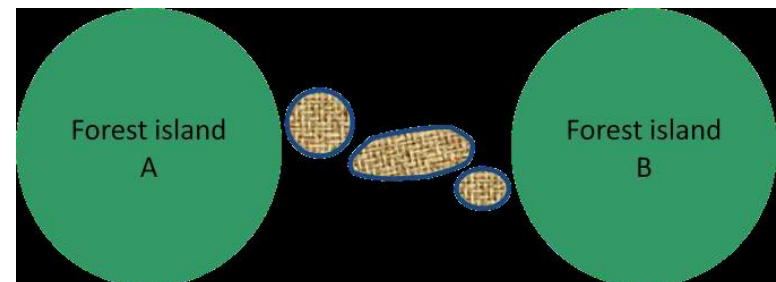
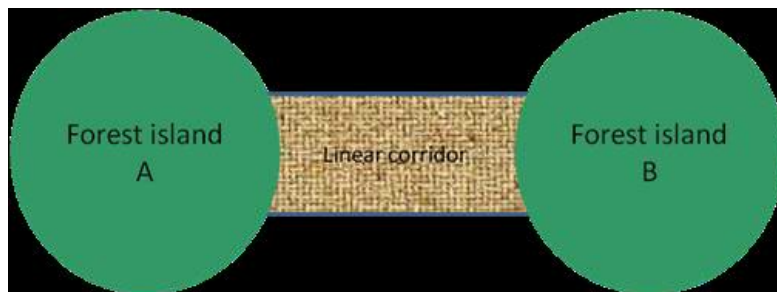
COMPONENT 1 AND EXPECTED OUTCOME

Outcome 1.1

Strengthened institutional capacity of the Federal Government to oversee implementation of the CFSMP, ensuring compliance by subnational actors, and monitoring impacts upon biodiversity, ecosystems and carbon stocks

Outcome 1.2

Enhanced wildlife crime law enforcement and wildlife monitoring capacity emplaced at national and state levels and in target forest landscapes to ensure reduction of wildlife and forestry crime



COMPONENT 2 AND EXPECTED OUTCOME

Outcome 2.1

Biodiversity and ecosystem service provision is mainstreamed in forest landscape management in the three priority landscapes via sustainable forest landscape management plans, resulting in maintained status of biodiversity and ecosystem services

Outcome 2.2

Corridor establishment increases connectivity of critical ecological linkages identified in the CFSMP and supports carbon emission avoidance and carbon sequestration under SFM practices

Outcome 2.3:

The socioeconomic status of local communities improved and support for conservation increased through the generation of sustainable livelihoods based on wildlife, and the reduction of human-wildlife conflict

COMPONENT 3 AND EXPECTED OUTCOME

Outcome 3.1:

The long term biodiversity and ecosystem conservation of the CFS is enhanced through the diversification of funding sources for conservation

Outcome 3.2:

Funding allocations for biodiversity and ecosystem conservation in the CFS are secured and formalised

Outcome 3.3:

Strategic planning processes in place and being used to link financing to conservation management needs



Contribute to several of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets

Strategic Goal A, 'Address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity across government and society'

- increasing awareness of the values of biodiversity of the CFS amongst all stakeholder types from government to local community, and providing guidance as to how to manage it sustainably;
- integrating biodiversity into development poverty reduction strategies for the Orang Asli based on the sustainable use of natural resources;
- increasing positive incentives for the conservation of biodiversity through PES schemes and limiting the negative impacts of utilisation of natural resources through AMMO protocols and monitoring

Strategic Goal B, 'Reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use'

- reducing the rate of loss, degradation and fragmentation of the natural habitats of the CFS, and
- encouraging the sustainable management of agriculture and forestry through sustainable landscape management plans.

Strategic Goal C, 'To improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity',

- strengthening wildlife crime law enforcement capacity so preventing the extinction of the Malayan tiger and other species targeted for wildlife crime, with an aim to increase the tiger population by 20%; improving mitigation measures for HWC conflict.

Contribute to several of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets

Strategic Goal D, 'Enhance the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services',

- through the safeguarding the provisional ecosystem services of the CFS, namely water provision, and the involvement of indigenous and poor communities in sustainable resource use activities with an emphasis on gender equality;
- avoiding emissions of carbon through the gazettement of at least 20,000 ha forest as well as sequestering carbon through ARR activities in at least 4,000 ha semi-degraded forest.

Strategic Goal E, 'Enhance implementation through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building',

- through improving the knowledge base of biodiversity and ecosystem services values of the CFS via developing and introducing relevant tools for monitoring these aspects and applying them to landscape management, and improving information sharing mechanisms;
- mobilising financial resources for CFS conservation through PES schemes, fiscal transfers, corporate biodiversity and carbon offsets and voluntary conservation levies.



SFM REDD+

Good management practices applied in existing forests

3.1.1: A watershed PES scheme will be developed in one of the target landscapes, to be replicated in the other two based on lessons learned;

2.1.2: Site-specific sustainable forest landscape management plans will be developed and implemented in 3 target landscapes of the CFS (following review of plans currently in existence), ensuring sustainable forest landscape management in 693,500 ha of critical forest landscapes;

1.1.2: The environmental management and mitigation measures hierarchy will be incorporated into landscape management planning;

2.2.1: At least 4,000 ha of semi-degraded forest will be rehabilitated in line with ARR methodology, sequestering approximately 17,600 tC/yr;

2.2.1: At least 20,000 ha of critical corridor forest will be gazetted, avoiding emissions from deforestation of 1.49 million tC;

1.1.1: The National Biodiversity Clearing House Mechanism will be made more applicable to landscape management planning, including through incorporation of mechanisms for monitoring carbon stocks

Conclusion

This proposed project (GEF 5) will complement and provide support to the current CFS Project undertaken by the FDPM/NRE

Successful implementation of this project requires close cooperation among Federal and state agencies involved.

Branding of CFS like Heart Of Borneo must be done collectively and to bring more attention and financing for this Plan.

State governments will set up or use existing state level committee to implement the project effectively

Related Development

1. Stakeholders include Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Works, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Primary Industries
2. Input to the 11th Malaysia Plan strategic papers for Economic Planning Unit
3. Additional funding from private sectors for securing the linkages – Sime Darby, FELDA
4. Conservation Vehicle License Plate initiative
5. Discussion with related projects – NBSAP, PA, ABS, REDD+, PES etc



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A path to survival

EXCLUSIVE

READY TO GO: An ambitious plan that will ensure the survival of wildlife in Malaysia is set to take off, but needs commitment from state governments

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THE United Nations Development Programme is stepping in with a US\$108 million (RM126 million) capacity-building initiative to help Malaysia realise an ambitious inland conservation master plan that will ensure the survival of many endangered species in the country.

The five-year project, the Central Forest Spine (CFS) Master Plan, which has been funded globally, will see fragmented forest complexes in the peninsula being linked up to create one continuous wildlife sanctuary.

The plan, in planning agency 2012 Maturia, Resources and Environment Ministry, supported by the Forestry Department, and the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWP).

With funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in April, work, which is due to start in the second quarter of next year, will look into the structural and legal problems that need to be overcome, as well as improving the capacity of the various stakeholders to make the CFS a sustainable, long-term reality.

UNEP's involvement is welcome news to many non-governmental organisations which have been worried that the CFS, which was first conceptualised in the National Physical Plan (NPP) as early as 2006, would remain nothing but a grand plan.

→ **More on page 9**

SUNDAY STAR, 7 OCTOBER 2014

interview with 21

ABD RAHMAN & ABD RAHIM



Fighting for our forests

Forestry Department director-general Datuk Prof Dr Abd Rahman Abd Rahim speaks about the importance of protecting our forests and catchment areas to prevent our dams from drying up.

By **CHRISTINA CHIN**
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Photos by **AZHAR MAHFUD**

THERE can never be enough trees or forests for Datuk Prof Dr Abd Rahman Abd Rahim. The Forestry Department director-general, who likens the forests to his office, feels fortunate to be doing what he loves – planting and caring for trees.

Work visits to lush tropical forests and parks invigorate him and on his days off, the father-of-three returns with his wife for brisk walks.

Insisting that forestry is as much a science as it is an art, the 57-year-old Penang-born explains how nurturing a tree is an enriching experience that requires both skill and talent.

For Prof Dr Abd Rahman and his forestry team, managing 4.8 million hectares of forest reserves comes with huge challenges.

Worried for his rangers who face black magic spells, blowpipe attacks and deadly threats from illegal logging syndicates, he is lobbying hard for them to be given guns.

He has also spoken out against the encroachment of water catchment areas and the degazetting of forest reserves for development, projects and highways such as the controversial EKEV project.

→ The proposal to de-gazette parts of the Ulu Langat, Gombak, Ampang and Bukit Sungai Puteh forest reserves totalling 106,65ha for the construction of the East Klang Valley Expressway (EKVE) has become a controversy. Why is your department allowing our forests to be de-gazetted for development?

Public perception is that we are just letting this happen but as a technical department, we don't have the power to say no even if we fight till the last breath

because of the National Land Code. We can only advise the federal or state governments (whoever owns the land). Like the public, we discourage de-gazetting forest reserves because the loss is too great. Day's de-gazette just to avoid paying compensation to property owners or because building an alleviated highway is too costly. Cutting down forests should be the last and only resort.

And, if there is no other choice but to de-gazette, mitigation measures must be taken. Before building a highway, we have to ask ourselves if we really need it. Does it solve traffic congestion? No. We should be improving public transportation instead.

But highways aren't the only threat to forests. Look at Iskandar Malaysia (in Johor) – roads and power pylons are needed but we say the same thing: let's explore the alternatives to cutting trees.

→ Why are our forests catching fire so easily?

We have three kinds of forests – dry inland, peat swamp and mangrove. Some 90% are dry inland forests which catch fire because of smokers and farmers. The El Niño dry season makes it worse. Although peat swamps only comprise 3% of our forests, it is the most dangerous.

Peat fires are the hardest to control because the fire burns underground. Farmers drain water from peat swamps to irrigate their crop and when a careless driver throws his cigarette stub, the dry peat swamp catches fire. That's why all along the route to KLIA in Sepang, you see peat fires.

→ What is the situation on illegal logging in the country?

My department only controls permanent forest reserves. Non-permanent forest reserves are either owned by the state or private individuals – we do not

have a say in what they want to do with it as our role is only advisory. This is what the public does not understand. The peninsula

has 5.8 million hectares of forests, of which 4.8 million hectares are permanent forest reserves. Less than one per cent of our permanent forest reserves were encroached by the orang ulu and those living in the peripherals of the forests. Irresponsible development, greed and fires are what threaten our forests. We only remove mature trees from permanent forest reserves to prevent them from dying and even then, we make sure replanting is done immediately.

All logging activities in the permanent forest reserves are monitored closely – especially when timber pricing is good, to make sure that only what is allowed on the permit is cut.

By 2015, my target is to achieve 0% illegal logging but we need more funds to increase our enforcement personnel, vehicles and equipment.

→ You want your men armed. Is there really a need?

Yes. Even Road Transport Department and Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission officers have pistols but my guys only have their pangkat. We are requesting for pump guns for all our enforcement officers. They have faced blowpipe attacks and even black magic. They are the target of organised crime syndicates.

Being armed will give them confidence. At least my men can scare off the illegal loggers by firing warning shots into the air. Don't worry, they are not going to be trigger happy and shoot at people.

→ The Klang Valley has become a hub for illegal agarwood trading in peninsular Malaysia. Forests in Penang, Perak, Pahang and Johor were

among the worst-hit states by agarwood thieves. Selangor was also not spared. Where is the enforcement?

On July 9, we raided a house in Padang Lalang, Selangor Perak, and arrested 13 Vietnamese for illegal possession of 5.2kg of agarwood. We also confiscated various equipment used to fell the trees. We received a tip-off that they were processing the agarwood there. We believe the arrest has crippled the syndicate behind the agarwood thefts in the country because the mastermind is likely based in Penang.

Syndicates from Vietnam and Cambodia have been travelling north to south to steal our agarwood. This also happens on state-owned land, not just in the permanent forest reserves. The Penang Botanic Gardens where there's been a number of agarwood thefts, for instance, is state land.

→ You have been in the forestry department for some three decades. What are you most proud of?

When I completed my master's degree in forestry science in 1987, the future of forestry here became crystal clear. I had learnt how a computer could integrate volumes of data, maps and information, to assist in planning for our forests.

Analysis and simulation can be done in quick time to ensure that the best decisions are made when faced with questions like what is the most suitable tree to plant in our forests. I am proud that together with my former boss, we pioneered the use of personal computers in the field of forestry and set up computer divisions here.

When I did my doctorate in Scotland, Malaysia was still using programmes like Wordstar but I was already working on Excel and Word Pro over there. What computers could do was well

beyond my expectations. When I returned, I insisted that my officers make full use of technology because it is an indispensable tool for foresters. Whoever goes out on field work must bring a laptop along. I am proud that my officers are tech-savvy.

→ What is the biggest challenge in managing the country's forests?

There has to be better co-operation between the federal and state governments. I am willing to work with both. For example, the federal government commits to an international environmental charter but the state does not implement it. If a state stops logging, what will it get? You want to conserve yet you need money. There must be a balance between policy and economic need. There is no one simple solution. Sincerity is important. I always invite the public and non-governmental organisations to work with us.

→ Natural Resources and Environment Minister Datuk Seri G. Palaniyandhi recently called on all agencies to work together to combat illegal land clearing and occupation in Cameron Highlands, which had become increasingly widespread.

This is an issue of deforestation on Pahang state land, which is not under our control.

→ What are your hopes for our forests?

Forests do not only mean timber. The tropical forest is so diverse and complex. It enriches me. I know we still need more land to build roads if we are to achieve developed nation status by year 2020 but before we do in three years, I hope to see five million hectares of permanent forest reserves in the peninsula. This would require the states to give up their land bank. This is my mission.

An aerial photograph of a vast, dense tropical forest. The forest is a deep green color, with many tall trees visible. In the background, there are several layers of mountains, some of which are covered in forest and others that appear as blue silhouettes against a cloudy sky. The sky is filled with soft, white and grey clouds.

**Thank you
Terima Kasih**

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