

Asian Wetland Symposium in KK

in July

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KOTA KINABALU: The Asian Wetland Symposium (AWS), an international platform that highlights wetland conservation, is coming back to Malaysia – this time to Sabah – from July 18 to 20.

The last time it was held here was in 2001 in Penang and the one before this was held in Vietnam in 2008.

State Secretary Datuk Sukarti Wakiman said the host, Sabah Government, was targeting about 350 participants at AWS 2011 and 150 had confirmed their participation.

“They comprise 100 foreign and 50 local participants,” he told a press conference at his office in Wisma Innoprise, here, Thursday.

AWS 2011, the premier forum for management, research, education and public awareness on wetlands, is organised in collaboration with the Natural Resources and Environment Ministry, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) and Ramsar Centre Japan.

The theme of the symposium is “*Integrated Biodiversity Conservation: Linking Forests and Wetlands*”, with the primary objective of enhancing synergy in the delivery of the targets and goals of the Ramsar Convention, Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF).

Sukarti said AWS 2011 would have a special target focus on the Sabah wetlands, and aimed to identify practical strategies and mechanisms for enabling integrated biodiversity conservation with focus on wetlands.

Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman is expected to open the event. Also expected to attend are Ramsar Convention secretary-general Ananda Tiega and Unesco director of Ecological and Earth Sciences, Natarajan Ishawaran.