

State's forest now becoming more resource-oriented

By NIKKO FABIAN

KOTA KINABALU: The forestry sector in Sabah is presently undergoing a process of change from revenue-oriented to resource-oriented development based on the principle of sustainability.

In fact, Sabah had introduced its own concept of sustainable forest management system on its logged-over forest and one successful model implemented is at Dermakot and this system will be extended to other forest reserves statewide.

This was disclosed by Finance Minister Datuk Haji Musa Hj Aman during the launching of the two-day national seminar on "Practising Sustainable Forest Management: Lessons Learned and Future Challenges" at Shangri-La Tanjung Aru Resort here yesterday.

His speech was read by Assistant Minister to the Chief Minister Datuk Hj Abdul Rahim Ismail.

At present, Musa said one of the major concerns of the State Government was the ability to generate sustainable production capacity from commercial forest reserves, which included the development of forest plantations.

He said a total of 587,251 hectares of land within forest reserves have been earmarked for such development and the total areas for forest plantation development in the state now stands at 806,642 hectares.

"The areas that are being focused are the highly degraded and low stock forest lands," the Finance Minister said adding that to strengthen our commitment to sustainable forest the State Government has also imposed that

environment-friendly harvesting methods must be used in the extraction of timber.

In our efforts to implement sustainable forest management, Musa said the government has established twenty-seven forest management units or FMUs each comprising of approximately 100,000 hectares of Class II Forest Reserve Land.

According to him, all the FMUs have to comply with sustained yield and multiple use forest management practices as well as harvesting methods that reduces negative impacts on the forest.

Musa said it is very clear that sustainable management of our forest is both necessary not only to ensure that our forests will still be natural treasure for the benefit of our future generations but also have a continuous access to it for socio-economic purposes.



Rahim (second from left) having a friendly chat with some of the participants.