

Examine issues in holistic manner, stakeholders urged

By PAUL MUNST 22.11.2006 P. 2 human life and ecosystems are being felt.

KOTA KINABALU: Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Haji Aman wants stakeholders in the management of natural resources and the environment to examine issues in a holistic manner in order to achieve a sustainable society.

Within the context of sustainability he said it was important to sustain the capacity for renewal and evolution in ecosystems as well as innovation and creativity in the social systems.

"While this is much easier said than done, a joint effort from multi stakeholders in terms of problem solving to custom designing a solution is the key element for a successful approach," he said.

Musa who is also the Finance Minister said this in his speech when opening the three-day 2nd Southeast Asian Natural Resources and Environmental Management Conference (SANREM 2006) at a hotel here yesterday. Speakers from India, China, Korea, Japan and local universities were among the participants in the conference.

He commended the theme of the conference, "Sustainable Development Towards Better Quality of Life" for being timely and appropriate in achieving the objective of sustainability particularly in the 21st century when the effects of increasing levels of environmental degradation with its threats to

The idea of sustainability has emerged as the core for a desirable future state, he said when stressing on its importance.

Towards this end, Sabah endowed with biodiversity-rich forests has earmarked tourism as one of the economic drivers in the state's development since it is a non-consumptive industry.

"By and large, such a direction is very much in line with the state government's vision in ensuring its economy remains sustainable through environmentally friendly activities," he noted.

Efforts are also underway to look into the protection of the forest for its rich biological diversity as evidenced in the recent announcement to place some 300,000 hectares involving Ulu Segama, Malua and Kalumpang Forest reserves under sustainable forest management (SFM).

Musa said it was testimony to the state government's concern over the conservation and protection of vital biodiversity resources in Sabah.

By phasing out timber harvesting in these areas by 2007, he said the state would be forgoing significant revenue in the forestry sector but it was a decision that augured well not only for the conservationist and would also support other economic sectors in the state such



Musa (right) receiving a memento from UMS Vice Chancellor, Datuk Dr Mohd Noh Dalimin for officiating the conference

as ecotourism in the long run.

"These measures are to ensure that our biodiversity position remains strong and secure, although there is still much more to be done," he said.

The conference is a joint collaboration between the School of Science & Technology of Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) and the state's Science & Technology Unit.