

UMS invests in technology for forest management

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By Jenne Lajjun

KOTA KINABALU: Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) has invested RM1 million in LIDAR, a laser-based technology that allows foresters to check on the topography of an area to establish the density and type of forest covers as well as the height of trees in the forests.

Professor Dr Phia Mui How, a UMS holder of the Kelvin Tan Aik Pen Forestry Chair, disclosed that UMS is one of the few institutes in the region and the only one in the country to have the technology presently.

He said that the technology could be used to scan the entire Sabah's topography for her carbon stock as the technology is able to provide accurate information concerning Sabah's carbon stock.

"So far, no developing country has been able to provide an accurate account of their carbon stock," he said at the university's



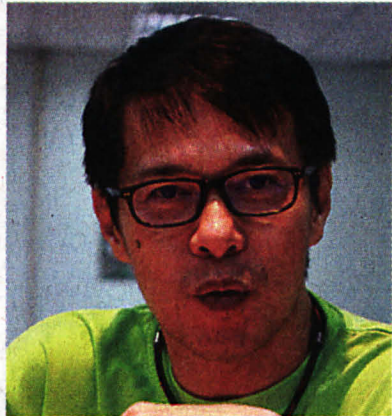
Fung

World Forestry Day celebration yesterday.

Subsequently, Dr Phia said they hoped to submit their claim to the United Nations.

Another use of the technology is to scan timber stock at Forest Management Units (FMUs) in Sabah, he said.

Bornion Timber Sdn Bhd's assistant operation manager,



Dr Phia

Fung Khung Ming, said they are using the technology to find out about the timber stock in their concession area. They are also using the technology to gauge the size of the area that would be replanted within the concession.

"We know how much money we will need to use, how many trees we can plant and how many seedlings we need to prepare. The technology

reduces our preparation time, and time is money," he said.

Aside from that, the technology is also being used by his company to detect the population of deer within the concession.

Fung told reporters that they have lost one million rubber trees as deer relish on eating the barks of rubber trees that are two to three years old.

"This would kill the trees," he said.

He added that they have been trying to find ways to stop the deer from feeding on the rubber tree barks by putting up tall fences but to no avail.

"We don't know the size of the deer population is in our concession...it is very difficult to detect deer," he said.

Their recent effort was to enlist the help of scientists to help them find a solution to their problem. They will know about the outcome in the next few months.