

21 participants end biodiversity conservation training programme

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KOTA KINABALU: Twenty-one participants from Indonesia, Brunei, Thailand, India, Uganda, Tanzania, Mali and Myanmar successfully ended their three-week Third Country Training Programme (TCTP) to learn from the experiences of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) funded Bornean Biodiversity and Ecosystem Conservation Programme here in Kota Kinabalu.

Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic and International) of Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) Professor Dr Amran Ahmed said the participants had been told of how different agencies in Sabah; namely UMS, Sabah Parks, Sabah Wildlife Department and Science and Technology Unit of the Sabah Chief Minister's Department, together with other stakeholders cooperate, work hand-in-hand in the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems in Sabah.

The Third Country Training Programme (TCTP) was formulated to improve the capacity for training and information dissemination in biodiversity conservation with other parts of the world such as the ASEAN, Pacific, South Asian and African countries.

Collaboration of the Malaysian Technical Training Programme (MTCP) under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malaysia (MoFA) and JICA aims to develop Malaysia to be the centre of excellence in conservation, research and utilization of tropical biological diversity 2020.

It is in line with the Malaysian National Biodiversity Policy which is one of the outputs of the Bornean Biodiversity and Ecosystems Conservation Programme (BBEC).

BBEC Programme is a joint technical cooperation between the Sabah State Government, Federal Government and JICA.

BBEC programme assists the development of an integrated and durable system for biodiversity and conservation in Sabah.

"I must say that what you have in your home countries in terms of resources, might not be resembling that of our own here in Sabah.

"Indeed, we are in no position to compare if one group is better than another. Rather, collectively, we have a very important responsibility in our hands to ensure that they continue to be available and contribute to the wellbeing of our lives," he said.

Amran was delivering the speech on behalf of the vice chancellor, Brigadier General Datuk Seri Panglima Prof Dr



Bolkiah (second left) presents a certificate to a participant from Uganda while Hamid (left) and Amran look on.

Kamaruzaman Haji Ampon.

The event was officiated by Assistant Tourism, Culture and Environment Minister Datuk Bolkiah Ismail.

The BBEC programme consists of two phases of which phase one focused on the transfer of skills and knowledge to strengthen technology required for conservation practice.

This phase took place between February 2002 and January 2008.

Phase two of the programme aims to support the implementation of the Sabah Biodiversity Enactment 2001 in order to achieve a balance between development and conservation by linking conservation activities and decision making process which started from October 2007 through 2012, making a full 10-year programme.

The TCTP in Sabah has now created a small history of its own and has given benefit to a total of 57 trainees from 16 countries, including Malaysia.

TCTP Programme has been coordinated by the Institute of Tropical Biology and Conservation, UMS, and supported by other state agencies namely the Science and Technology Unit of Sabah, Sabah Wildlife Department, Sabah Parks and Sabah Forestry Department.

The number of entities involved in this programme signals the intention of developing a long-term partnership and team working for the course of conservation.

This TCTP training programme includes lectures, seminars, and field visits on various types of ecosystem and conservation areas such as the Crocker Range Park, Lower Kinabatangan and Lower

Segama.

Among the main objectives of this course included the provision to participants the relevant knowledge and skills on conservation management from planning to implementation, monitoring and evaluation, as well as familiarize participants with integration between implementing agencies and the locals for better understanding of alternative livelihood in conservation

efforts.

This year is the final training course of this first three-year cycle of the TCTP programme in Sabah.

Also present were Professor Dr Abdul Hamid Ahmad, director of the Institute for Tropical Biology and Conservation, UMS; chief representative from JICA Malaysia, Tsutomu Nagae, and director of Sabah MoFA regional office, Mohd Aznor Mahat.