

STA Review

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May 2007

Malaysian External Trade Statistics for April and January - April 2007

Pada April 2007, Malaysia mencatatkan lebih perdagangan sebanyak RM6.0 bilion berbanding RM6.6 bilion bagi bulan yang sama tahun 2006. Penurunan dalam lebih perdagangan bulan sebanyak 9.4% atau RM620.7 juta disebabkan oleh peningkatan import sebanyak RM1.0 bilion berbanding jumlah eksport RM0.4 bilion. Bagi bulan April, jumlah eskport bernilai RM46.1 bilion dan import bernilai RM40.1 bilion berbanding dengan RM45.7 bilion bagi eksport dan RM39.1 bilion bagi import April 2006.

Untuk empat bulan pertama 2007, Malaysia mencatatkan lebih perdagangan sebanyak RM27.1 bilion berbanding RM32.4 bilion untuk tempoh yang sama 2006. Jumlah eksport meningkat 1.0% dari RM182.4 bilion ke RM184.2 manakala jumlah import meningkat 4.8% dari RM150.0 bilion ke RM157.2 bilion bagi tempoh yang sama 2006.

■ In April 2007, Malaysia recorded a trade surplus of RM6.0 billion compared to RM6.6 billion recorded for the same month in 2006. The decrease in the month's trade surplus of 9.4% or RM620.7 million was due to an increase in imports of RM1.0 billion against exports of RM0.4 billion. Total exports and imports for the month of April were valued at RM46.1 billion and RM40.1 billion respectively compared to RM45.7 billion for exports and RM39.1 billion for imports in April 2006.

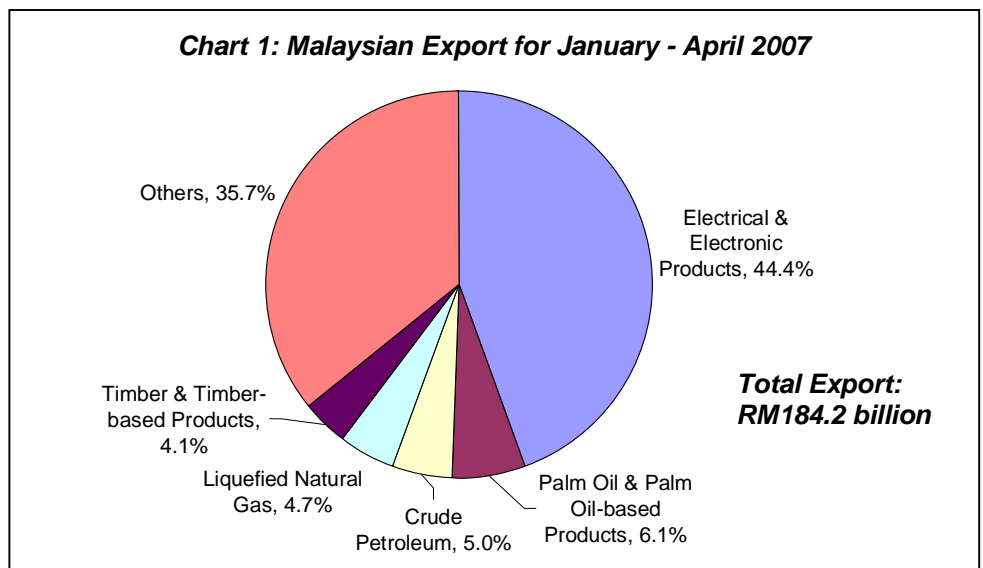
For the same month, in terms of composition of exports, electrical and electronic products, the largest contributor (42.4% of total exports) declined by 11.3% to RM19.6 billion. Imports of intermediate and capital goods which constituted 84.9% of total imports, posted a 5.1% gain to RM34.1 billion.

Balance of Trade

For the first four months of 2007, Malaysia's external trade balance recorded a surplus of RM27.1 billion against RM32.4 billion in the same

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Chart 1: Malaysian Export for January - April 2007



The printing of this month's STA Review was delayed due to some unforeseen circumstances. We apologise for any inconvenience caused.

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period a year earlier. Exports recorded a growth of 1.0% from RM182.4 billion to RM184.2 billion while imports moved up 4.8% from RM150.0 billion to RM157.2 billion.

Exports

Electrical and electronic products, valued at RM81.8 billion, remained as Malaysia's largest export revenue earner and accounted for 44.4% of total exports during the period January - April 2007. Export revenue from this category of products decreased by 5.5% or RM4.7 billion. The major component, electronic integrated circuits, which constituted 28.2% of total exports of electrical & electronic products increased by 4.6% or RM1.0 billion to RM23.1 billion.

Palm oil and palm oil-based products, with a total combined value of RM11.2 billion or 6.1% of total exports, retained its position as the second largest export revenue earner. Exports of palm oil, the major commodity (68.6%) in this group of products, posted a positive growth of 22.2% to RM7.7 billion.

Crude petroleum, the third largest commodity which accounted for 5.0% of total exports, recorded a drop of RM1.5 billion or 13.9% to RM9.3 billion. This was attributed to a decrease in average unit value of 12.0% or RM225.2 per tonne and a lower export volume of 2.1% or 123,000 tonnes.

Liquefied natural gas (LNG), the fourth largest export commodity, at RM8.6 billion or 4.7% of total exports, posted an increase of 8.0% or RM634.7 million. The increase was the result of firmer average f.o.b. unit value during the current period (+2.1% or +RM21.6 per tonne) and a higher export volume of 5.8% or 444,000 tonnes.

Timber and timber-based products, the fifth largest export

earner which contributed 4.1% of total exports, registered an increase of RM659.6 million or 9.5% to RM7.6 billion. The sixth largest export commodity, petroleum products which accounted for 2.9% of total exports, dropped 14.2% to RM5.3 billion.

Imports

The composition of imports by end-use for the three major categories of imports were as follows:

- a. Intermediate goods - RM111.7 billion (71.1% of total imports); the main component being parts and accessories of capital goods (excluding transport equipment) amounted to RM55.3 billion or 49.5% of intermediate goods,
- b. Capital goods - RM20.6 billion (13.1% of total imports), and
- c. Consumption goods - RM9.4 billion (6.0% of total imports).

Comparatively, the above items recorded the following changes in value over the same period in 2006 as shown below:-

- a. Intermediate goods - +RM8.3 billion (+8.0%),
- b. Capital goods - -RM0.5 billion (-2.5%), and
- c. Consumption goods - +RM0.8 billion (+9.2 %).

Direction of Trade

Malaysia's top five trading partners were the United States of America, the Republic of Singapore, the European Union, Japan and the People's Republic of China. These countries contributed 60.8% to Malaysia's total trade during January - April 2007. ❁

Source: Department of Statistics Malaysia

Mesyuarat Pertama Jawatankuasa Panduan Pensijilan Pengurusan Hutan telah diadakan pada 22 Mei 2007 di Wisma STA, Kuching. Ini merupakan mesyuarat susulan Bengkel Pendekatan Bersama dalam Penyelidikan untuk Pensijilan Pengurusan Hutan yang telah diadakan dari 12 hingga 13 April 2007 di Wisma STA.

Mesyuarat menerima laporan dari syarikat kayu yang sedang dalam proses penyediaan untuk pensijilan Unit Pengurusan Hutan masing-masing.

Jawatankuasa Pensijilan STA bermesyuarat pada 9 Mei 2007 di Wisma STA, Kuching. Ahli-ahli diberitahu perkembangan terbaru dalam pelbagai perkara terutamanya, draf Kriteria dan Indikator Malaysia untuk Pensijilan Pengurusan Hutan (Perladangan Hutan).

First Meeting of the Forest Management Certification Steering Committee

■ The first meeting of the Forest Management Certification Steering Committee took place on 22 May 2007 in Wisma STA. The setting up of this Steering Committee was one of the proposals of the "Workshop on Collaborative Approach to Research for Forest Management Certification: The Role for all Forestry-related Agencies and Institutions" which was held from 12 - 13 April 2007 at Wisma STA. Membership of the Steering Committee include the Sarawak Forestry Corporation (SFC), the Forest Department Sarawak (FDS), STA and STA Member Companies undergoing forest management certification. Seventeen people attended the meeting.

Mr. Liew Tchin Fah of SFC was unanimously elected as the Chairman for this committee. The meeting received reports from various timber companies on the progress of their preparation for certification of their Forest Management Units (FMUs). In addition, the meeting also went through the research requirements under the Malaysian Criteria and Indicators for Forest Management Certification or MC&I (2002). Based on these research requirements, the meeting proposed some projects and identified the Project Co-ordinators who will prepare the proposals. Progress reports related to these projects will be presented at the next meeting, scheduled for 14 August 2007. ❁

STA Certification Committee Meeting

■ The STA Certification Committee, under the chairmanship of Mr. Yong Nyan Siong met on 9 May 2007 at Wisma STA, Kuching. The meeting was briefed on the development of various matters arising from the previous meeting held on 20 July 2006. High on the agenda the draft Malaysian Criteria & Indicators for the Forest Management Certification (Forest Plantations) or MC&I (Forest Plantations). This draft standard is currently open for public comment. A

few concerns were raised, with the Secretariat being given the task to organize a meeting for all STA Licence for Planted Forests (LPF) holders to deliberate and comment on the draft. ❁



Picture: Meeting in progress

Third Malaysian Forest Dialogue Steering Committee Meeting

■ The multi-stakeholder Malaysian Forest Dialogue (MFD) is a result of an initiative by the HSBC Bank Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in collaboration with the Malaysian Timber Council (MTC), the Business Council for Sustainable Development Malaysia (BCSDM), the Malaysian Timber Certification Council (MTCC), the World Wildlife Fund Malaysia (WWF-Malaysia) and the Malaysian Nature Society (MNS).

The MFD aims to promote active engagement amongst the various

stakeholders within the Malaysian forestry and financial sectors.

STA, amongst a few others, had recently accepted an invitation to be a member of the Steering Committee for the MFD 2007 and hosted the Third MFD Steering Committee Meeting on 25 May 2007 in Wisma STA. The MFD 2007 is scheduled for 22 - 23 October 2007 at the Renaissance Hotel, Kuala Lumpur with the theme "Socio-economic Issues in Financing Sustainable Forest Management".



Picture: Meeting in progress

STA Tea Talk Soils: What and Where to Plant?

■ STA organized a Tea Talk in the afternoon of 12 May 2007 at Wisma STA, Kuching. The invited speaker was Mr. John Sabang who is attached with the Forest Research Centre of the Sarawak

Forestry Corporation who talked about "Soils: What and Where to Plant?". The afternoon event attracted a crowd of 79 people who are involved in tree plantation or who were just interested to learn

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Dialog Hutan Malaysia (MFD) adalah inisiatif HSBC Bank Malaysia di Kuala Lumpur dengan kerjasama Majlis Kayu Kayan Malaysia, Majlis Perniagaan Pembangunan Mampan Malaysia, Majlis Pensijilan Kayu Malaysia, Tabung Hidupan Liar Sedunia Malaysia dan Persatuan Alam Sekitar Malaysia yang bertujuan mempromosikan penyertaan pelbagai pihak yang berkaitan dengan perhutanan di Malaysia dan sektor kewangan. STA telah memberi sanggupan untuk menjadi Ahli Jawatankuasa Pemandu untuk MFD 2007 dan menjadi tuan rumah untuk Mesyuarat Ketiga Jawatankuasa Pemandu pada 25 Mei 2007 di Wisma STA, Kuching.

STA menganjurkan satu Tea Talk pada tengah hari 12 Mei 2007 di Wisma STA, Kuching. Penceramah jemputan adalah Encik John Sabang dari Pusat

Penyelidikan Perhutanan Sarawak Forestry Corporation yang berceramah tentang "Tanah: Apa dan Di mana untuk Menanam?". Kuliah disertai oleh 79 peminat yang terbabit dalam perdagangan atau ingin mengetahui dengan lebih mendalam perkara tanah.

Tumbuh-tumbuhan memerlukan cahaya, nutrien, air dan tanah untuk menumbuh. Tanah merupakan mineral atau bahan organik di permukaan bumi yang berfungsi sebagai bahan semulajadi untuk tumbuh-tumbuhan.

Tanah mempunyai tiga fungsi bagi tumbuh-tumbuhan.

- Sangga mekanikal
- Pemberian nutrien
- Sumber oksigen dan air untuk tumbuhan

Secara am, pokok tumbuh dengan baik di tanah yang baik; tanah berliat yang basah dan tebal dan di tapak yang ideal; cerun yang landai dan tempat berketinggian rendah dan tidak banjir. Kebanyakan spesies pokok terpilih bagi ladang hutan boleh didapati di pelbagai keadaan yang luas.

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more about the properties of soil.

Thus, what is soil? What does it contain? What are the types of soil found in the tropical rainforest? What roles do soil play in the influencing the growth of plants? These were some of the topics that were covered in the talk.

Plants need light, nutrients, water and soil to grow. Soil is the unconsolidated mineral or organic material on the intermediate surface of the earth that serves as a natural medium for the growth of terrestrial plants.

Basically soils provide three main essentials to plant growth.

- Mechanical support - The strong anchor of plant roots enables the plant to grow upright and receive the needed sunlight.
- Nutrition for plants - Soils are the storage place for plant nutrients.
- Oxygen and water supply to plants - Water for plants exist as water trapped or flowing between soil pores. Air in soil is essential for respiration of plant

roots. Soil typically is made of 45 % mineral matters, 5 % organic matter, 25 % gas and 25 % water. Soil also harbours living organisms such as earthworms and microbes.

Soils are classified according to their physical and chemical properties. Physical properties include colour, texture and structure. The colour of soil indicates the organic matter content in the soil, drainage condition, the microbial activity and its fertility status. Normally dark colored soil indicates higher fertility as a result of higher content of organic matters, soil air and availability of nitrogen. Most tropical soils are either red or yellow coloured from high content of iron oxides. The texture of the soil is a property used to describe the relative proportion of different grain sizes of mineral particles in a soil (clay, silt, and sand). Soil texture influences how well nutrients and water are retained in the soil. An ideal soil contains equivalent portions of sand, silt, clay, and organic matter. Soil structure is the grouping or

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Picture: Mr. John Sabang speaking to the participants

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aggregate of soil particles. Good soil structure provides sufficient pores between soil aggregates that enable water mobility and good soil aeration.

Chemical properties include pH and cation exchange capacity. The pH level indicative of the acidity or alkalinity as this will affect the nutrient contents. Macronutrients tend to be less available in soils with low pH (acidic) whereas micronutrients tend to be more readily available in soils with high pH (alkaline). Lime can be added to the soil to make it less acidic and to supply calcium and magnesium for plants to use. Cation exchange capacity is the cation adsorption capacity of soil colloids. The most active portions of the soil are those in the colloidal state (< 0.001 mm or 1 micron).

Soils in the tropical rainforests are generally shallow, rather poor in nutrients and almost without soluble minerals due to the thousands of years of heavy rains that leached the nutrients in the soil obtained from weathered rocks. However, the tropical rainforests are productive because of good growing conditions i.e. the

combination of high temperatures, light, and rainfall year-round coupled with especially efficient nutrient recycling. The rainforest has a very short nutrient cycle. Nutrients generally stay in an ecosystem by being recycled and are mainly found in the living plants and the layers of decomposing leaf litter.

Thus, when implementing a forest plantation project, it is important to look into the adaptability of the species to the site to avoid massive failures. The interim solution to meet the variety of site conditions is to match tree species to site water regimes. The forest plantation sites can broadly be subdivided into four categories: frequent water stress, occasional water stress, impeded drainage, and alluvial and sites with moving ground water.

Generally trees will thrive well on good soils: clay rich, moist and deep and on ideal sites: gentle slope and at the lower elevation but not subjected to prolonged flood condition. Most of the selected tree forest plantation species are found on a wide range of site conditions. ❁

Export of Wood and Wood Products to Japan

■ STA had received copies of a "Guideline for verification on legality and sustainability of wood and wood products" from the Japan Federation of Wood Industry Association. This guideline in six languages (English, Chinese, Bahasa Indonesia, Spanish, Japanese, etc.) was prepared by the Council for Tackling Illegal Logging Issue Japan.

This Guideline is the result of the introduction by the Government of Japan of a new system to give priority to governmental purchases of wood and wood products that can be identified by their legality based on the logging of forests since April 2006 in an effort to address the issue of international illegal logging.

This system puts the

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Pihak STA baru-baru ini menerima garis panduan untuk penentusahan sah dan kekal kayu dan hasil kayu.

Garis panduan ini boleh didapati dari Urusetia STA atau dimuat turun dari www.sta.org.my

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governmental agencies under the obligation to purchase legalised wood and its related products as a top priority. The local government are encouraged to do the same although it is not compulsory for them. This system is also expected to be adopted by the private enterprises in their procurements in future.

The Japanese industries such as the Japan Federation of Wood Industry Association and nearly 140

related organisations of woods, forestry and timber industries in the central and local areas of Japan, had decided on a self course of action to supply the legalised wood and wood products to tackle the issue of illegal logging.

Photocopies of this Guideline (in six languages) are available from STA Members from the Secretariat. The guideline in English can also be accessed online at the STA website at www.sta.org.my. ❁

STA joins the Malaysian Employers Federation

STA telah menyertai Persekutuan Majikan Majikan Malaysia sebagai ahli mulai 13 April 2007 susulan syor Jawatankuasa Buruh (Mahkamah Industri) STA.

MEF merupakan organisasi bagi majikan sektor swasta di Malaysia yang ditubuhkan pada 1959 untuk mempromosi dan menjaga hak asasi dan kepentingan majikan.

■ STA joined the Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) as an Association Members (AM-2 Category) with effect from 13 April 2007 upon the request of the STA Labour (Industrial Court) Committee.

MEF is the central organisation of private sector employers in Malaysia recognised nationally and internationally. Established in 1959, MEF promotes and safeguards the rights and interests of employers.

The objectives of MEF include:

- To promote HR development to enable employers to meet current business challenges;
- To promote harmonious employer-employee relationship; and
- To present and promote employers' interest at national and international level.

MEF can assist its Members in terms of providing services such as forums for consultations and discussions on any matters related to labour issues. The following are the services made available to MEF Members:

1. National and International Representation - MEF represents employers in various councils and boards such as the NLAC, EPF, SOCSO, NPC to name a few. This participation ensures that our employers' are represented at the national level organisations.
2. Industrial Relations Services- MEF provides advice, guidance and assistance in all aspects of labour laws and industrial relations matters MEF also provides court representation and convenes for monthly meetings to discuss matters of general and particular interest on employment problems.
3. Training- Regular trainings are provided for the benefit of members.
4. Research and Information Services- MEF conduct surveys for labour related matters on IR issues.

If STA Members have enquiries or issues relating to labour, kindly contact the STA Secretariat. ❁

Ligna Fair, Hannover, Germany

■ The Ligna Fair for the Forestry and Wood Industries, was held in Hannover Messe, Hannover, Germany from 14 to 18 May 2007. The exhibition area, covering 16 halls and 4 open areas, consists of exhibits grouped under the following themes:

i. **Forestry** - (i) Machinery, equipment, tools and accessories (ii) Transport, storage systems and logistics information systems (iii) Energy from Wood.

ii. **Sawmill Technology** - (i) Machinery and plant for the production of sawn timber (ii) Measuring and optimizing systems for roundwood yards and sawmills.

iii. **Solid Wood Working** - (i) Machinery and plant for solid working (ii) Waste wood utilization and energy generation (iii) Drying systems for sawn timber.

iv. **Wood Material and Veneer Production** - Machinery, plant and accessories for the production of wood-based materials and veneers.

v. **Wood Craft - Joinery trade** - Machinery, equipment and accessories for joinery and cabinet making.

vi. **Wood Craft - Carpentry trades** - Machinery, equipment and accessories for timber construction and carpentry.

vii. **Wood Craft** - Engineered wood, accessories and services - (i) Timber construction. (ii) Wood materials.

(iii) Wood Trading. (iv) Interior finishing/remodeling. (v) Furniture production. (vi) Technical applications for wood.

viii. **Furniture Industry** - (i) Machinery, plant and facilities for industrial furniture production. (ii) Automation systems.

ix. **Special Presentations** - (i) Forestry Research and Training (ii) Careers in wood. (iii) Wonders in wood. (iv) International Industry Associations.

This year's focus had been on energy from wood biomass, in particular, wood splitting machines, wood palletizing machines, energy generating systems and heat recovering systems. Thin-frame sawing technology and sawn timber optimised cutting systems appeared to be a prominent theme.

In the forestry area, the focus had been on machinery and equipment for recovering wood biomass from the forests and portable sawmill systems.

The Ligna Fair catalogue, some information on products, including some CDs on woodworking machines, 3-D thermoforming and research on sawmill systems are now available for viewing at the STA Secretariat. ❁



Picture: Inside a Gang Rip Saw with innovative gripping and conveying system

Pameran Ligna untuk Industri Perhutanan dan Kayu telah diadakan di Hannover Messe, Hannover, Negara Jerman dari 14 hingga 18 Mei 2007.

Kawasan pameran merangkumi 16 dewan dan 4 kawasan terbuka, terdiri dari kumpulan bertema Perhutanan, Teknologi Kilang Papan, Kayu Padat dan Pengeluaran Venir, Kraf Kayu, Industri Perabot dan Persembahan Istimewa.

Katalog Pesta Ligna, maklumat produk, termasuk CD tentang mesin tukang kayu, format haba 3-D dan penyelidikan sistem kilang kayu boleh didapati di Urusetia STA.

Modul ketiga kursus Diploma Lepas Graduada, Sains Gunaan: Biologi Hutan Tropika dan Silviculture telah dijalankan dari 21 hingga 25 Mei 2007. Dalam modul ini, peserta-peserta diberi kuliah dan kerja amali tentang ladang hutan. Sesi amali telah dijalankan di Hutan Simpanan Sampadi. Pelajar juga berpeluang melawat Bank Benih Semenggoh dan Ladang Engkabang di Semenggoh.

Post Graduate Diploma in Applied Science

■ The third module of the Post Graduate Diploma in Applied Science: Tropical Forest Biology and Silviculture was conducted from 21 to 25 May 2007. In this module, students were given lectures and practicals on forest plantations. Practical sessions were carried out at the Sampadi Forest Reserve. The students also visited the Semenggoh Seed Bank and an Engkabang Plantation in Semenggoh. 🌿



Picture: Dr. Joseph Jawa Kendawang explaining about the trees growing in Landeh Plantation in Semenggoh

Persidangan Kesemua Bahagian 5 IUFRO 2007 akan diadakan dari 29 Oktober hingga 2 November 2007 di Grand Hotel Taipei.

Persidangan ini dirancang untuk membawa bersama penyelidik dalam Hasil Hutan dan bidang yang berkaitan dari seluruh dunia.

IUFRO All Division 5 Conference, Taipei

■ The 2007 IUFRO All Division 5 Conference will be held from 29 October to 2 November 2007 at the Grand Hotel Taipei. This Conference is designed to bring together researchers in Forest Products and related fields from around the world. Discussion will embrace progress and needs in research to meet rapidly increasing demands for all kinds of forest products, while maintaining the forest as a source of such products and a resource for social, economic and environmental benefits. Among the major topics to be discussed are:

- Wood quality
- Physiomechanical properties of wood
- Wood-based materials and their applications
- Wood protection
- Wood processing

- Composites and reconstituted products
- Properties and utilisation of plantation wood
- Energy and chemicals from forest biomass
- Forest products marketing and business management
- Non-wood forest products
- Sustainable utilisation of forest products
- Forest products education
- Pulp and paper

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2007 Sarawak Nepenthes Summit

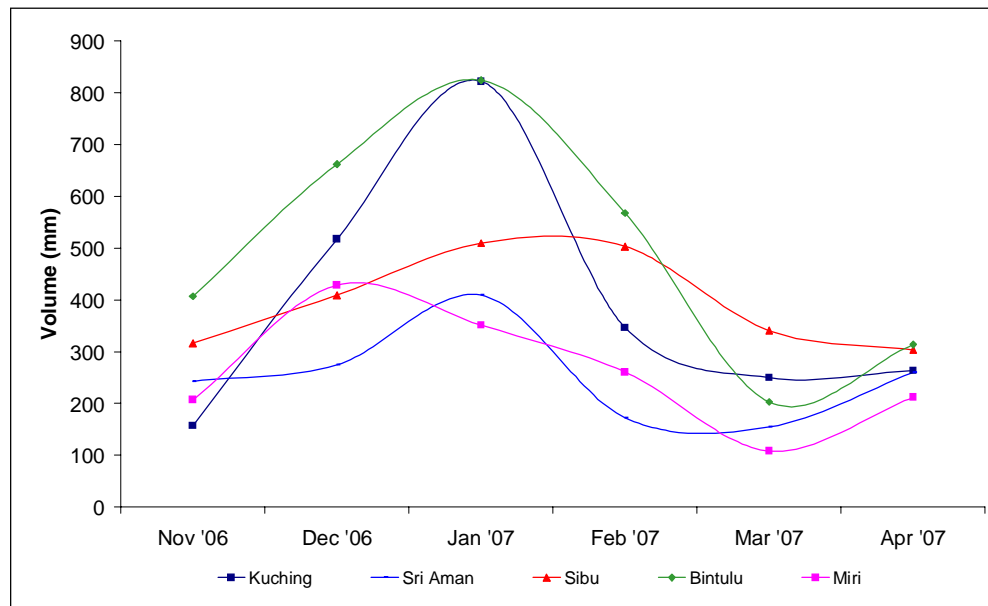
■ Few plants capture the imagination more than the tropical pitcher plants of the genus *Nepenthes*. These carnivorous plants, as well as being famous for their ability to lure, trap and devour insects and small animals, have an amazing diversity of pitcher designs and have become the fascination of horticultural enthusiasts and biological researchers worldwide. Because of the vulnerable status and commercial potential of many of these species, they have also been the focus of sustainable utilisation as well as important icon for conservation efforts in tropical Asia.

Thus, in an effort to promote public awareness of *Nepenthes* and to provide an avenue for the dissemination of international research, the Sarawak Forestry Corporation (SFC) and the Sarawak Society for Natural Science (SSNS) will be hosting the first international Sarawak Nepenthes Summit with the theme "Pitcher Plants as a Symbol of Borneo's Biodiversity" in Kuching from 18 to 21 August 2007.

For further information, please visit www.wildborneo.com.my/conference2007. ☘

Sarawak Forestry Corporation (SFC) dan Persatuan Sains Semulajadi Sarawak akan menganjurkan Sidang Kemuncak Antarabangsa Periuk Kera Sarawak bertema "Periuk Kera sebagai Lambang Biodiversiti Sarawak" di Kuching dari 18 hingga 21 Ogos 2007.

Rainfall : November '06 - April '07 Kadar Hujan Bulanan



Source : Malaysian Meteorological Services.

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