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This monthly news bulletin is produced by Sarawak Timber Association (STA) to disseminate information to our counterparts on training, research and other relevant areas.

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International Symposium on Sustainable Management of Tropical Forests

The Research Institute of Tropical Forestry (RITF), a branch institute of the Chinese Academy of Forestry (CAF) organised the International Symposium on Sustainable Management of Tropical Forests as part of its 50th anniversary celebrations. The Symposium was held in the Guangzhou Baiyun International Convention Centre, Guangzhou from 1 to 3 September 2012.

The objectives of the Symposium were to exchange and share experiences and knowledge on:

- (1) cultivation and utilization of tropical forests;
- (2) biological diversity and conservation of tropical forests;
- (3) ecosystem study of natural tropical forests; and
- (4) genetic improvement and sustainable management of tropical tree plantations.

FRIM Director-General Datuk Dr Abdul Latif Mohmod signed an MoU on behalf of the Malaysian Forestry Research and Development Board, while RITF-CAF was represented by its Director, Dr Xu Daping. The MoU incorporates provisions for effective research, development and extension activities for tropical forestry and plantation establishment for *Eurycoma longifolia* (tongkat ali), *Santalum album* (cendana) and *Eucalyptus* species (kayu putih), including hybrid varieties.

The two sessions in the Symposium were (i) Genetic Improvement and Sustainable Management of Tropical Forests,

chaired by Dr. Khongsak Pinyopusarerk and (ii) Conservation and Ecosystem Services of Natural Tropical Forests, chaired by Dr. Zhang Shougong. The nine papers presented in the first session covered, amongst other topics, experiences from a *Eucalyptus* Improvement Programme in Guangxi, Southern China; Silvicultural Management for Rattan; Accelerating Tree Breeding and the Role of Tropical Forests in the Wood-based Panel sector in India. The second session also had nine papers focusing on Climate Change and Biodiversity: Research and Policy Issues in Malaysia; Jianfengling Rain Forests Dynamic Plots; Managing Forests for Carbon and Water; and Assessment of Potentials for Carbon Sequestration and Greenhouse Gas Emissions in the United States.

The symposium culminated with two field trips to (i) fast growing valuable tropical tree plantations within the Guangdong Province, Guangzhou, and (ii) natural rain forests and ecosystem station between the Guangdong and Hainan Provinces.

The first stop for the first field trip was at the Tiexi Operation Section, State-owned Beiling Mountain Forestry Farm of Zhaoqing City, where the three collaborating agencies; the Forestry Science and Technology Extension Station, Guangdong Provincial Forestry

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Bureau, the Research Institute of Tropical Forestry, Chinese Academy of Forestry and State-owned Beiling Mountain Forestry Farm of Zhaoqing City, planted a 333 ha experimental trial plot with more than 19 species of valuable tree species using intensive cultivation techniques. China is moving away from planting trees for the pulp and paper industry to high value timber species such as sandalwood in view of high labour costs.

The next stop was to the demonstration plantation of sandalwood in the Seedling Breeding Center for Valuable Tree Species, Zhaoqing City, Gaoyao Country where various host plants *Kuhnia rosmarinifolia* (pot host), *Tephrosia candida* and *Ligustrum quihoui* (middle-term host plants) and *Acacia auriculaeformis*, *Acacia mangium*, *Casuarina equisetifolia* and *Dalbergia odorifera* (long-term hosts) are planted together with *Santalum album* L. (East Indian Sandalwood). Significant tree growth were observed in these trail plots. The delegation also visited *Cinnamomum camphora* and *Eucalyptus* hybrid (Clone "Guang 9" between *Eucalyptus grandis* and *E. urophylla*) plantations. After twenty years of research, the productivity of the unimproved genetic stock of eucalypt has been improved from 5 – 8 m³/ha/year to about 20 m³/ha/year.

A visit to an experimental mixed plantation comprising *Dalbergia odorifera* T. Chen, a semi-deciduous tree which is renowned for its excellent wood

properties as well as medicinal value, and *Santalum album* L. This mixed plantation promotes the growth of *S. album* through nitrogen fixation, which accelerates the formation of heartwood.

The field visit culminated with a visit to the Dragon Pearl Island (DPI), the first private sandalwood research base which is owned by the Dragon Pearl Island Sandalwood Industrial technology Corporation Limited. This base was established in 2003 focusing on Sandalwood research, covering management regimes, tending methods, genetic improvement and product development.



Photo: Welcome by the owners of Dragon Pearl Island Sandalwood Industrial technology Corporation Limited, a private sandalwood research base for sandalwood

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NATIP Brainstorming Session

The National Timber Industry Policy (NATIP) is a national framework policy to ensure the continued viability of the timber industry in Malaysia up to the year 2020. It is envisaged that the annual export earning of timber and timber products will reach RM53 billion at the end 2020. NATIP was officially launched by Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Tun Abd Razak, in his capacity as the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia on 17 February 2009 at the Putra World Trade Centre in Kuala Lumpur.

The objectives of NATIP are to provide the

policy direction for the timber industry in Malaysia; ensure synergistic development of the upstream and downstream activities in the timber industry; and enhance the industry's competitiveness to meet the challenges of globalisation and liberalisation.

Activities developed for NATIP represent a constituent of the Government's broad programme of building a resilient and competitive nation at a high level of sustainable growth. The implementation will

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Did you know that.....

According to the Korea Forest Service (KFS), South Korea and the 10 member nations of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) will establish the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization (AFOCO) in early September 2012. AFOCO will assist to prevent deforestation and climate change in Southeast Asian nations. South Korea will also provide fund and technology to create new woodlands in those nations.

Source: MTIB News Extracts (Vol.36/09/12)

Did you also know that....

The Australia and New Zealand governments have sealed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in effort to fight illegal logging in the respective countries. The agreement also include sustainable forest management. The rules on preventing the illegally-logged timber imports into Australia will be introduced to the Senate of Australia soon. On 20 August 2012, the Australia's House of Representatives has passed the new rule. All timber products for sale in Australia should be supplied from legally harvested wood, as per the new law.

Source: New Zealand Herald, 21 Aug 2012



The MPIC Economic and Promotional Mission to Brussel

The Ministry of Plantation Industries and Commodities (MPIC) organised an Economic and Promotional Mission for palm oil, timber, rubber and kenaf products to Europe; covering Germany, France, Romania and Belgium, from 10 to 21 September 2012. The Mission was led by its Minister Tan Sri Bernard Dompok with good support from senior officers from the public and private sectors.

The main aim of the Mission was to discuss potential areas to strengthen the export of palm oil, timber, rubber and kenaf products with the public and private sectors of these countries.

In Brussels, Belgium, the Minister and the Malaysian delegation had a dialogue with representatives of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and the industry on 19 September 2012 where they were briefed on the current development of the Forest Law, Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) between the European Union (EU) and Malaysia.

At the dialogue, representatives of NGOs voiced strongly against Malaysia's intention to sign the VPA with the EU as they commented that they could not accept the way Malaysia had conducted its stakeholders' consultations. Despite the Minister's clarification that

the NGOs made the decision not to participate in the consultations, they opined that Malaysia had failed to engage the NGOs in the consultation process. The representatives from the NGOs further commented that the scope covered in this VPA must include sustainability, land rights and the rights of communities to forest land as well as addressing corruption in the country. They demanded that Malaysia should also include representatives from civil society in the main committee to guide the negotiating team and that VPA must be developed through multi-stakeholder consultation process where civil society and local communities are represented.

The Minister reminded the representatives from the NGOs that the main purpose of the FLEGT VPA is to provide assurance to the EU consumers on the legality of imported timber through the timber legality assurance system as agreed in the VPA and it cannot address the broader objectives of corruption, land right disputes.

The Minister also met the EU Commissioner of Environment on 20 September 2012 to discuss the progress of the current negotiation on FLEGT VPA between the EU and Malaysia and other related issues.



Photo (above) Networking lunch between Malaysian delegates and NGOs

Photo (below) Dialogue session in progress





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be carried out by the relevant ministries, agencies and organisations i.e. The Ministry of Plantation Industries and Commodities, Malaysia (MPIC) as the governing Ministry while the Malaysian Timber Industry Board (MTIB) is the central implementing agency.

However, the performance of NATIP has not met the targeted expectation. The total export of timber and timber products in 2011 was RM20.03 billion in value which was RM10.39 below than the projected figure (RM30.42 billion). As a result of this slow pace of growth, hence a brainstorming session was organised from 6 to 8 September 2012 at the Grand Lexis Port Dickson in Negeri Sembilan to deliberate on issues and challenges that are preventing the timber industry to grow and to find new synergies to enable the timber industry to achieve its export earnings of RM53 billion by the year 2020. A total of about seventy participants, mainly from Peninsular Malaysia (MPIC, relevant ministries and agencies, timber trade associations and the relevant support services, including research organisations, institutes of higher learning and the financial sectors) attended this session while STA was the only participant from East Malaysia.

Seven working groups, based on the seven

thrusts of NATIP (i.e. Industry structure, Supply of raw materials, Innovation and technology, Marketing and promotion, Human capital development, Funding and incentives, and Bumiputera participation) were formed to brainstorm and formulate its own high impact programme. It was recognised that in order for NATIP to be successful, all three regions, i.e. Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak must contribute its share. Also, it acknowledged that the policy directions and its activities must be relevant and applicable to the timber industry of the three regions.

At the conclusion session, participants agreed that MTIB should organise follow up meetings to deliberate on the synergy to establish Entry Project Points (EPPs) for the timber industry to achieve its export earnings of RM53 million, to create more skilled jobs; and to develop the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) by the year 2020 as proposed by Datin Paduka Nurmalia Abdul Rahim, the Secretary General of MPIC.