



KERATAN AKHBAR

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Govt's policy to see conservation of more forests and biodiversity

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NEWS on the launch of the National Forestry Policy quite recently by Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Mohd Yassin came at a time most welcome by all.

The people, in particular nature lovers and enthusiasts, have been in earnest looking forward to further enhancement of biodiversity conservation and environmental quality of our forests, and at the same time balancing the rational use of land by the relevant authorities and state governments for all sorts of purposes. Protection forests, work forests, amenity forests

as well as research and education forests are part of our permanent forest reserves, which must be managed expediently and conserved in efforts to address the issues raised not only by locals but also the international community and bodies pertaining to biodiversity conservation and utilisation of our genetic resources, which are fast dwindling.

A few weeks ago, our prime minister launched Greening Malaysia: Our Trees, Our Life campaign and so far, according to him, more than four million species of trees have been planted by individuals, organisations, government ministries and agencies as well as the private sector.

Hopefully, such a move would be able to stabilise our country's climatic and physical conditions, give a new lease of life to our water

resources, soil fertility, environmental quality and reduce damage caused by flooding and erosion to rivers and agriculture land.

The concept of rational land use through the national policy would ensure not only a continued supply of forest products for exports and other purposes but also maintain sufficient areas for recreational and tourism purposes thus increasing public awareness about our greenery and forests.

And for the first time, the policy is uniting the federal and state governments in a mega diverse forestry conservation effort whereby all states have agreed to adopt the policy which outline a clear direction for the forestry sector in facing new challenges.

This shared policy, hopefully, will result in all states coming together as one in protecting our

forests and ease their dependence on the implementation of forest beyond timber such as ecotourism, herbal industry and pharmaceuticals.

The Perikatan Nasional-led government needs to ensure that all pragmatic strategies and action plans to conserve our forests responsibly and sustainably are implemented as planned without delay amid real issues affecting the world over, including Malaysia, such as habitat loss, species extinction and inadequate financial resources to manage biodiversity.

May the policy remain strong enough to see the desired targets are achieved in the protection of our forests in the years to come.

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Anpang**