



SARAWAK TOURISM BOARD'S 5-YEAR GREENING PROGRAMME ECOGREENPLANET TO MEET SARAWAK'S ASPIRATION TO PLANT 35 MILLION TREES

- *Memorandum of Understanding Signed Between Sarawak Tourism Board and Sarawak Forestry Corporation Initiating a 5-Year Greening Programme.*
- *RM 47,000 Raised from the Contributions by Virtual Festival Goers from the Rainforest World Music Festival and Borneo Jazz 2022 to Plant Trees at Samunsam Wildlife Sanctuary.*
- *Sarawak Positions Itself as a Leading Player in Responsible Tourism and a Leading Destination for Eco-Tourism in Southeast Asia.*

KUCHING, 27th MAY 2023 — Today marked a pivotal moment for environmental conservation in Sarawak, as Sarawak Tourism Board (STB) and Sarawak Forestry Corporation (SFC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding together formalizing a joint five-year tree planting programme under the ecoGreenPlanet programme.

The ecoGreenPlanet programme reflects Sarawak's aspiration to plant 35 million trees across Sarawak, in support of Malaysia's goal of planting 100 million trees under the country's Reforestation Programme. This 'greening' endeavour was first introduced by STB in June 2022, in conjunction with two of Sarawak's iconic events - the Rainforest World Music Festival (RWMF) and the Borneo Jazz (BJ) festival, and both festivals had been recognized for their efforts to promote environmental awareness and sustainability, a testament to Sarawak's dedication in preserving its unique biodiversity and rich natural heritage.

Over RM 47,000 was raised as part of the ecoGreenPlanet programme through contributions by corporate sponsors:

- Canard Media Sdn Bhd
- Harwood Timber Sdn Bhd
- Hornbill Skyways Sdn Bhd
- KTS Mutual Sdn Bhd
- Land Custody & Development Authority,
- My Car
- Petroleum Sarawak Berhad (PETROS)
- Sarawak Energy Berhad
- Sarawak Timber Association
- SKS Airways Sdn Bhd
- Society Atelier Sarawak
- Trienekens (Sarawak) Sdn Bhd

and festival goers from the RWMF and Borneo Jazz Fest in 2022, with 20% of the virtual ticket proceeds being donated towards tree-planting activities.



The sponsorship and participation by festival goers exemplifies how collective efforts can significantly propel environmental sustainability as these funds will be instrumental in enabling the tree-planting programme, contributing to the rejuvenation of the planet's ecosystem.

STB Chairman YB Dennis Ngau shared that to ensure the sustainability of our natural heritage, Sarawak has actively championed responsible tourism initiatives aligned with the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Sarawak's Post-Covid Development Strategies (PCDS) 2030.

"I am happy to announce that STB is now an affiliate member of United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) which will allow us to learn more on sustainability and Responsible Tourism from an international platform and go beyond our current efforts in advancing responsible tourism practices in the region," he added.

"On behalf of STB, I am proud to emphasise that we will continue to embrace sustainability causes, in line with our aspiration to position the Region as leading player in Responsible Tourism and a leading destination for eco-tourism in Southeast Asia," Dennis added further.

STB CEO Sharzede Datu Haji Salleh Askor said, the ecoGreenplanet programme, a joint effort between the STB and the SFC, aims to plant over 1,700 trees for now in the Samunsam Wildlife Sanctuary covering an area of 4.25 hectar as part of a broader commitment to promote Planetary Health by advocating activities that foster environmental sustainability, support biodiversity, and combat climate change.

"The Samunsam Wildlife Sanctuary, renowned for its rich biodiversity, serves as an ideal location for this initiative, providing a nurturing environment for the newly planted trees to thrive," she added.

The upcoming RWMF 2023 continues to set a standard for the Sarawak Tourism Board's efforts through demonstrating Sarawak's dedication to Sustainable Development Goals and Responsible Tourism as the festival presents another opportunity to enhance general consciousness about sustainability through implementation of eco-friendly

The ecoGreenplanet programme is more than just a tree planting programme as it represents the ongoing commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainability and testament to the belief in the power of collective action and the role that everyone plays in safeguarding the future of the planet.

Some of the activities undertaken by STB at RWMF to advocate sustainability includes banning of single use plastics, encouraging upcycling of used materials, exploring innovative solutions to waste management, and providing free shuttle buses to ferry festival-goers from the city and nearby locations to festival grounds to alleviate carbon emission and prevent congestion – all towards placing STB as a key player in advocating Planetary Health through its Responsible Tourism practices.

For further information on Sarawak’s greening initiatives, please refer to <https://sarawakresponsibletourism.com>

-ENDS WITH PICS-

Pic 1 Caption:



Sharzede and SFC CEO Tuan Haji Zolkipli Mohamad Aton exchange MOU documents, as YB Dennis (middle) and representatives from both SFC and STB look on.

Pic 2 Caption:



(From left) SFC CEO Tuan Haji Zolkipli Mohamad Aton, YB Dennis and Sharzede planting a Gaharu tree to mark the tree-planting initiative.



About Sarawak

A kaleidoscope of culture, adventure, nature, food and festivals: is the best description for Sarawak. Sarawak comprises 31 ethnic tribes with their own unique traditions, lifestyles, music and food, while sharing their warm hospitality. Malaysia's largest state, Sarawak, endowed with some of the oldest rainforests on Earth. Its vast landscape spans over 120,000 sq kms, with towering mountains and cool highlands, jagged limestone formations and mysterious cave systems, winding rivers and quiet beaches; where adventures are waiting to happen. Festivals are hosted throughout the year celebrate the eclectic blend of modern and traditional culture, food, music and religious practices that can be found nowhere else. In Sarawak, there is always 'More to Discover'.

About Sarawak Tourism Board

Sarawak Tourism Board is the key promoter for Sarawak. STB is a winner of the Asia Pacific Excellence Awards 2016 by Asia-Pacific Association of Communications Directors (APACD) and has received the ASEAN PR Excellence Award 2015 Gold Award. The Rainforest World Music Festival is a five-time Top 25 Best International Festivals recognised by Songlines World Music Magazine (2011 – 2015). Meanwhile, the Rainforest World Music Festival and Borneo Jazz Festival Virtual Experiences were recognised by World Responsible Tourism Awards 2021 as 'Ones to Watch' under Destinations Building Back Better Post-Covid and most recently the virtual experience of the 2021 Rainforest World Music Festival won the PATA Gold Awards 2022 under Sustainability and Social Responsibility Category for Culture. Sarawak Tourism Board also won the Golden City Gate 2019 five-star award, Marketing Excellence Awards 2021 for Excellence in Mobile Marketing (bronze) and PATA Gold Awards 2022 its destination video entitled 'A Journey Awaits' under the marketing category.

About Rainforest World Music Festival

The Rainforest World Music Festival (often abbreviated as RWMF) is an annual three-day music festival celebrating the diversity of world music, held in Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia, with daytime music workshops, cultural displays, craft displays, food stalls, and main-stage evening concerts. Starting with only a few hundred people in the audience in 1998, the Festival has grown to an internationally recognized music festival, receiving awards among them as one of the Top 25 Best International Festivals awarded by Songlines Magazine for six consecutive years (2010 to 2015). The festival features a wide range of performances from traditional music, to world fusion and contemporary world music.

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