FGV Champions Conservation of The World's Largest Flower, Rafflesia and World's Smallest Bears Species, The Sun Bear with FRIM and PERHILITAN

Felda Global Ventures Holdings Berhad (FGV), the world's largest producer of Crude Palm Oil (CPO) has collaborated with the Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM) and also Department of Wildlife and National Parks (Perhilitan) to begin conservation efforts for Rafflesia and the sun bear, respectively.

FGV today signed a Memorandum of Collaborations (MoC) with FRIM to set up the first Rafflesia Conservation and Interpretive Centre (RCIC) in Peninsular Malaysia, and another MoC with Perhilitan to set up the Sun Bear Conservation Programme.

"We realise that little has been done to understand these two species and coupled with lack of awareness amongst the general public, they may face the same fate as the Javan rhino, green Pea fowl and few other species that have been lost in Malaysian territory."

"We definitely would not want this to happen to the Rafflesia and sun bear, therefore FGV had decided to contribute to their conservations" said FGV Group President and Chief Executive Officer, Dato' Emir Mavani Abdullah.

Also present were YBhg Dato' Dr Abd Latif Mohmod, Director General of FRIM, YBhg Dato' Misliah Mohamad Basir, Deputy Director General of Perhilitan and Mr. S. Palaniappan, Head of R&D Cluster of FGV.

The FGV-FRIM initiative through the memorandum on Rafflesia will see the establishment of RCIC that will cover research, conservation (in-situ and ex-situ), education and local tourism.

This is the first collaboration project between private sector and government agency in Peninsular Malaysia concerning Rafflesia research and conservation effort following a discovery in 2013 of a Rafflesia population in Sungai Lebey area, in Felda Bersia Timur in Grik, Perak.

Dato' Dr Abd Latif expressed gratitude to FGV for pledging to provide funds amounting to RM 5 million for the collaborative RCIC project for a period of six years for the conservation of the endangered species.

The centre will become the first Peninsular Malaysia's Rafflesia showcase garden and

interpretive centre and to cater to the researchers within and outside Malaysia with regards to its conservation.

On the other hand, the Sun Bear Conservation Program (SBRP) will encompass research, rehabilitation of injured/orphaned bears, education and the establishment of Citizen Action Groups that will act as the eyes and ears of enforcement agencies in controlling illegal hunting and poaching.

“Although they are found throughout Malaysia, the sun bear are predominantly sighted in our plantations’ surrounding areas in Pahang and Terengganu,” said Dato’ Emir, adding that FGV will contribute RM450,000 annually for five years towards the Sun Bear Conservation Programme, in Sungkai, Perak.

Dato’ Emir added that FGV’s sustainability strategy now focuses on implementing best practices holistically, and adhering to all relevant regulatory and sustainability requirements.

“We also work closely with the relevant agencies to develop sustainability standards,” he said, adding that collaborations with agencies such as FRIM, Perhilitan and other partners is important for FGV’s long term growth and sustainability.