FGV inks RM1.7 million agreement for Biodiversity Conservation with Borneo Conservation Trust

Felda Global Ventures Holdings Berhad (FGV), the world's largest producer of Crude Palm Oil (CPO), contributed RM1.7 million to a five-year biodiversity conservation initiative with Borneo Conservation Trust (BCT), here today.

FGV through its wholly owned subsidiary, Pontian United Plantations Berhad (PUP) inked an agreement with BCT, witnessed by Sabah Minister of Tourism, Culture and Environment Datuk Seri Panglima Masidi Manjun and BCT Chairman Tan Sri Bernard Dompok.

The ceremony saw BCT Honorary Secretary Datuk Dr. Laurentius Ambu and FGV Head of Plantations (East Malaysia) Denys Collin Munang signing a Memorandum of Agreement to re-establish a Mega Biodiversity Corridor in Lower Kinabatangan Basin project.

The five-year project is a first of its kind to support the re-establishment, restoration and protection of key migratory routes for the wildlife to safely migrate between pockets of forests in the lower Kinabatangan basin. A key aspect of the project is to provide a sustainable alternative livelihood for the local communities living along the Kinabatangan River through a sustainable community eco-tourism program.

Animals migrating through the Lower Kinabatangan Basin include the Borneo pygmy elephants, Orang Utans and proboscis monkeys. It is estimated that there are currently over 300 pygmy elephants and 750 orang-utans in the lower Kinabatangan Basin.

With the cooperation of Sabah Wildlife Department, the project entails mapping the land parcel, enhancing forest protection, development and implementation of an eco-tourism and forest-related sustainable livelihood in one of the project site located in the Kinabatangan region.

FGV Group President and Chief Executive Officer Dato' Mohd Emir Mavani Abdullah said the project reflects FGV's commitment to sustainable practices in business.

"As a responsible agribusiness company, FGV is committed to best management and sustainability practices. Mega Biodiversity Corridor in Lower Kinabatangan Basin project is, without a doubt, an important and essential sustainability initiative," he said.

Dato' Mohd Emir said FGV has worked closely with Sabah Wildlife Department, Sabah Forestry Department and various NGOs including Borneo Conservation Trust to help conserve the biodiversity of lower Kinabatangan Basin.

“This sustainability initiative is in line with our status as an active member of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) and our International Sustainability and Carbon Certification (ISCC). FGV has a time bound plan to achieve certification for all its 72 mill complexes by 2017,” he said.

In October last year, FGV launched a demarcation exercise to re-establish the riparian reserve in its Sabah estates, creating a minimum distance of 50 metres between the plantation and the river bank culminating in a tree planting programme to secure the mega biodiversity of Lower Kinabatangan.

“By enhancing the riparian buffer zones and preserving the natural ecosystem, FGV continues to conserve the natural environment, mitigates carbon emissions, and creates an important wildlife corridor for the endangered species to migrate from one wildlife reserve to another,” said Dato’ Mohd Emir.

BCT Chairman Tan Sri Bernard Dompok congratulates the management of FGV for supporting the Mega Biodiversity Corridor in Lower Kinabatangan Basin project.

“The co-operation and commitment from FGV will further strengthen biodiversity conservation, protection and management issues of the ecological corridor in the Kinabatangan Mega Biodiversity Corridor area,” said Tan Sri Bernard Dompok.

Datuk Dr. Laurentius Ambu, the Honorary Secretary of BCT said the project has outlined a comprehensive programme that would be implemented in the next 5 years, adding that it would take at least three years before the biodiversity conservation initiative could take effect.

“With the involvement of FGV, we believe that the project activities such as the riparian restoration, wildlife monitoring especially on elephants and orang-utans; and protection of existing forestland could be implemented.

“The contribution from FGV will also indirectly aid the implementation of a management plan for Lower Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary that will be headed by Kinabatangan Management Committee (KMC) soon.

“FGV should be seen as a role model for their contribution and commitment on the forest, wildlife and biodiversity protection in the Lower Kinabatangan Basin,” said Datuk Dr. Laurentius.

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