

Malaysia

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1. Global Warming: Climate Linkages with Energy, Security and Transboundary Haze

2009 began with rising tides in East Malaysia, albeit with no casualties reported, and with the Haze which was felt as early as February in Penang. In a symbolic gesture, the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) Malaysia organised a 'switching-off' of non-essential lights for an hour from 8.30pm on 28 March, when Malaysia joined 74 other countries to observe "Earth Hour" resulting in a reduction of 550 MW electricity consumed locally.

The Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP) convened its Second Study Group Meeting on Security Implications of Climate Change (CC), 30-31 May in Kuala Lumpur, and the subsequent 23rd AP Round-table in June featured a concurrent session on "The endangered earth - what the AP can do about CC". In early August, the five-year HSBC

Malaysia Rainforest Carbon Project /study in the Danum Valley Conservation Area to mitigate the impact of global warming was launched, and late September saw some 33 AP city-members of the Tourism Promotion Organisation for AP sign a four-point joint declaration in Kota Kinabalu, pledging, *inter alia*, to promote the use of buses with limited carbon dioxide emission.

On 5 October, ISIS Malaysia and the Singapore Institute of International Affairs (SIIA) co-organised the Third Dialogue on Transboundary Haze Pollution which saw representatives from the two countries plus Brunei, Indonesia and Thailand drawing up recommendations which included calling for climate change to be linked to problems of deforestation and fires.



Third Dialogue on Transboundary Haze Pollution, 5 October, KL
Seated left to right, 6th & 7th places- Assoc. Prof Simon Tay, Chairman, SIIA & Tan Sri Mohamed Jawhar Hassan, CEO & Chairman, ISIS Malaysia

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2. Biodiversity: UNESCO Recognition and Activities for Conservation

In mid-February, the Sabah island of Sipadan was nominated to be placed on UNESCO's list of the world's seven wonders of nature, and early March saw wildlife poachers and traders poised to face stiffer penalties, via amendments to the Wildlife Protection Act 1972, to be approved in June.

March also reported studies by Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT)'s scientists on the viability of the Horseshoe Crab's blood as component of the endotoxin test, a standard used by laboratories and hospitals worldwide to detect harmful bacteria and endotoxins. In late September Kinta Nature Park, Perak was gazetted as a wildlife sanctuary and all conventional logging operations near the Maliau Basin, Sabah to be ceased by year's end. In October,

Malaysia pledged its support for the Heart of Borneo (HoB) Initiative, a voluntary transboundary cooperation involving three nations (Brunei, Indonesia & Malaysia) and entailing funding of various biodiversity projects and activities.

Forest protection received a Royal boost in October when the Raja Muda of Perak recommended that special laws be enacted to conserve the Belum-Temenggor tropical rainforest amid plans to promote it as a tourism product. In early November, the Deputy Prime Minister called for heightening of joint enforcement among state governments, wildlife and forestry authorities to ensure sound management and conservation of biodiversity.

3. Sustainable Consumption and Production: Waste Recycling and Green Technologies

August saw the launching of a solid-waste separation pilot project jointly conducted by the National Solid Waste Management Department, Universiti Teknologi Mara and the private sector, whereby Putrajaya residents would serve as a model for increasing recycled waste nationwide from about 5% currently to 22% by the year 2020.

Various 'plastic phase-out' campaigns were conducted throughout the year, including the Penang Government's 'Say no to plastic bags' drive involving retail outlets. A local company announced its plans for a pilot plant in Shah Alam to convert fuel from plastic waste; and Penang's Universiti Sains Malaysia revealed in June its newly invented durable and degradable EnviroPLAST plastic. The Universiti Malaysia Pahang's biodegradable films made from natural waste won awards at the British Invention

Show in London, held on 14-17 October. Calls for conserving water and storing rainwater were regularly made by state governments, including Negri Sembilan, Selangor and Penang, the latter considering a penalty on those failing to reduce consumption by 10%. Sarawak also began water rationing during its dry spell beginning August.

Meanwhile the Energy, Green Technology and Water (EGTW) Ministry announced a requirement on all new government buildings to have at least one green feature such as dual-flush toilets. This is in line with the Ministry of Works' Green Building Index (GBI), introduced early in 2009. The EGTW Ministry also declared its intention to launch a nationwide campaign to promote the government's green technology fund, which would 'fast-track' efforts by green-centric companies.