

FOREWORD



This publication provides an overview of forest management, conservation and development in Malaysia.

Covering large stretches of the country, the forests have made, and are making, significant contributions to our socio-economic development. At the same time, they are performing a very important role in maintaining environmental stability and ecological balance. Hence, the forests serve the twin purposes of production and protection, both equally important national goals.

From production, Malaysia is able to generate employment from timber-based industries, earn foreign exchange and provide revenue to both Federal and State Governments. At the same time, the Government expends large sums annually on forest management and development, including R&D.

The production forests are managed as a renewable resource in perpetuity, as are large areas of virgin forests which are kept undisturbed as protection forests. Malaysia attaches great importance to the maintenance of the forests for research and recreation and as nature reserves, national parks and wildlife sanctuaries.

Where forest areas have given way to agriculture, they have mainly gone into tree crops such as rubber, oil palm and cocoa. The rubber plantations themselves provide a renewable source of timber and together with plantation forests, they will help complement the supply of timber from the natural forests. The Government places strong emphasis on further processing with the view towards obtaining higher and more value-added products from a smaller volume of timber. This would help conservation whilst enhancing the economic status of forests in relation to other land uses.

This publication gives an insight into the rich flora and fauna Malaysia's forests possess. Readers will also be able to gain an appreciation of the efforts by the Malaysian Government to strike a balance between ecological and environmental needs on the one hand and economic production and development on the other. All in all, both the key roles of protection and production are harmonised so that the sound management and preservation of our forests will help advance our economy and protect our land, climate, habitat and ecology.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Lim Keng Yaik'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Dato' Seri Dr. Lim Keng Yaik
Minister of Primary Industries, Malaysia.