

400,000ha for forest plantations plan

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Dr Joachim representing the Chief Minister in officiating the State-level International Day of Forests 2023 by planting a tree at the Rainforest Discovery Centre (RDC) in Sandakan.

SABAH is presently maintaining 64 per cent of its land mass under forest cover in an effort to protect its natural resources, said Chief Minister Datuk Seri Hajiji Noor.

He said the area includes 3.84 million hectares or 52 per cent of the State's mass as gazetted forest reserves and other protected areas.

The move was also in line with the Sabah Government's commitment to maintain at least 50 per cent of the State's land under state forest cover in the Sabah Forest Policy 2018, he added.

"To boost the State's forest management and protect the important treasure, Sabah has gazetted up

to 1.9 million hectares or 26.4 per cent as a Totally Protected Area.

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“It is important to achieve the target of 2.2 million hectares or 30 per cent of the State’s area (as a Fully Protected Area) by 2025,” he said at the launch the State-level International Day of Forests 2023 at the Rainforest Discovery Centre (RDC) in Sandakan on April 27. His speech was read by Deputy Chief Minister II cum Local Government and Housing Minister Datuk Seri Dr Joachim Gunsalam.

The Chief Minister said the Sabah Government is also doing its part to rationalise land use to balance socio-economic development and environmental conservation with the drafting of a Statewide Forest Master Plan by the Sabah Forestry Department.

He said the plan would provide guidelines for a management of forest resources action plan for the next 25 years in the State.

“Through this Forest Master Plan, the Sabah Government will ensure all Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) remains protected and does not neglect sustainable socio-economic development for the wellbeing of Sabahans,” he said.

Thus, Hajiji said, the development of the forestry sector, especially forest plantations, should not be seen as a contributor to deforestation because it is carried out in accordance with approved forest development plans and comprehensive guidelines for environmental protection.

“The Sabah Government has identified a small part of the forest reserve that has been degraded with an area of approximately 400,000 hectares for that purpose as stipulated in the 2022-2036 Forest Plantation Development Action Plan.

“The development of forest plantations is one of the strategies of Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) to restore the productivity of degraded forests, to reduce the dependence of the local timber industry on the supply of logs from natural forests and to ensure a sustainable supply of raw materials”, he said.

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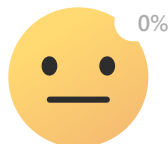
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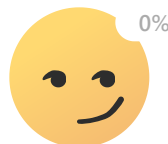
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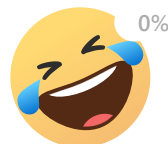
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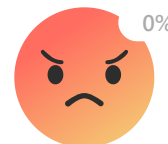
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