

GEC QUARTERLY UPDATE (JANUARY TO MARCH 2023)

Introduction

This report provides updates on the progress of GEC's activities for the first quarter (Q1) of 2023: January to March 2023. Following are key activities carried out in Q1 2023:

Forest and Coastal Programme (FCP)

Following are some highlights of key activities conducted by the Forest and Coastal Programme during this quarter:

- **Establishment of new project office in Mersing, Johor**

GEC established a project implementation team with a new field office in Mersing, Johor, in collaboration with the Johor State Forestry Department, for the implementation of the Tabung Haji Plantation Conservation Project and other related projects in Johor until year 2030.

- **Tree planting programmes**

In March 2023, two major mangrove tree planting events took place with 1,500 trees (1,000 *Rhizophora apiculata* and 500 *Rhizophora mucronata* species) planted at Pasir Panjang Laut in Manjung, Perak and Tanjung Surat, Johor for the Closure of the YSD project and start of Aramco Project respectively.

Similarly, two monthly peatland tree planting programmes were successfully carried out at Raja Musa Forest Reserve on Feb 25 and Mar 18 in conjunction with World Wetlands Day and International Forestry Day, respectively, with the planting of 900 Tenggek Burung trees (*Melicope lunu-ankenda*) in FC 32 by 204 volunteers.



Mangrove tree planting programme conducted by GEC and community under YSD (left) and Aramco (right) projects.

- **Events and visits**

In conjunction with Climate Action Festival, GEC participated in an exhibition at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) on 10 January 2023.

GEC engaged Komuniti Warisan Hutan Sg. Tenggi Selatan (KWHSTS) members in two key activities in March 2023: a study visit to the agricultural site of Johan Setia and Kampung OA Pulau Kempas on Mar 21 to equip their 14 members with the Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) on existing peatland to cultivate short-term food crops and a training session on Mar 22 for 24 KWHSTS members on the management of peatlands for agricultural activities and the requirements for Malaysian Sustainable Palm Oil (MSPO) certification.

The Community-based Forest and Wetland Landscape Management and Restoration Programme Booklet, published in conjunction with the International Day of Forests in March and was circulated to key stakeholders as well as used as interpretive material to showcase success stories of the forest-based communities involved in the wetland restoration activities in Peninsular Malaysia.



A study visit to Muzium Orang Asli Gombak, Muzium Seni Kraf Orang Asli KL, Bank Negara Malaysia Museum and Arts Gallery and Bukit Tadam Resort was conducted for 15 pax Orang Asli from Kampung OA Pulau Kempas and Bukit Cheeding from 29-30 March 2023 together with Yayasan Hasanah to provide them with exposure and tap new ideas on the establishment and operation of cultural centres, village profiling and indigenous village tourism package development and implementation.



A study visit to 'Muzium Orang Asli Gombak' by Orang Asli from Kampung OA Pulau Kempas and Bukit Cheeding (left). YAM Tunku Tan Sri Imran Ibtisam Almarhum Tuanku Ja'afar, Chairman of Yayasan Sime Darby (YSD) visited GEC exhibition booth at UKM (right)

Peatland Programme (PP)

Malaysia: Sabah

The Department of Agriculture in Beaufort provided hands-on training for 43 participants from Ladang Nenas Kg Takuli Beaufort on Feb 21 at the Beaufort Agriculture Office. This training is a requirement for certification, and it covered various topics related to best management practices (BMP) for agriculture that the community should follow.



Sarawak

GEC has expanded its conservation programme at Kelabit Highlands, Bario, Sarawak, funded by Airbnb Community Fund. Activities under this project include engaging with community, to develop a small-scale pilot project to plant highland palm, for upland peatland assessment, and to create awareness on upland peat ecosystem. During a kickoff mission from Feb 13-16, GEC received positive feedback from the community and local agencies including the Sarawak Forestry Corporation (SFC) and Small Administrative Office (SAO).



Pahang

Specialists from University Malaysia Terengganu (UMT) conducted fish sampling in the Southeast Pahang Peatland Landscape (SEPPL) from Feb 9-12, and are currently analysing the results. The annual Asian Waterbirds Census (AWC) 2023 was conducted along the Sg Bebar and Pekan Forest Reserve border on Feb 25 and 26 and recorded 961 individuals of 81 bird species, including three Vulnerable and eight Near Threatened bird species. During the Census, the Critically Endangered Banded Langurs, which were previously thought to be endemic to only Johor and Singapore were spotted, providing important update to biodiversity conservation and primate research groups. In anticipation of the predicted prolonged dry season starting in Q2 2023, and to reduce the fire risk within the community agriculture areas, our partner YP Plantation

Holdings installed four new Fire Danger Rating System (FDRS) boards and provided a floating water pump to the Kg Baharu Cenderawasih pineapple farmers.



Regional level:

A series of discussions have been undertaken to explore support for ASEAN Member States (AMS) in developing a cost-effective air quality monitoring system. An agreement has been reached to establish cooperation between MAHFSA, DLCorp Vietnam (air quality vendor and NGO), and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) to support Lao PDR in their air quality monitoring system. The cooperation work will include providing devices, installation, training, and maintenance for the system. Further discussions are still ongoing to support other countries.

GEC attended the 3rd Meeting of the ASEAN Task Force for Development of New Haze-Free Roadmap held in Jakarta, Indonesia (Mar 15-16). This was followed by a hybrid workshop (with 100 participants) on the ASEAN Investment Framework (AIF) for Haze free sustainable land management organised by the MAHFSA Programme (Mar 28-29) to support the development of the AIF document and harmonise the proposed pillars and strategies to attract more funding to ASEAN through pipeline projects and proposed new project ideas by AMS, private and public sectors.



Indonesia : Yayasan Gambut (YG)

YG in collaboration with GEC has secured a grant for mangrove restoration in Buruk Bakul Village in Riau Province. YG was also involved in the Terminal Evaluation Review mission with IFAD for the SMPEI Project and supported GEC to organise the AIF workshop at Jakarta. Additionally, YG has been recognised by the Riau Provincial Government and nominated to join the Social Forestry Working Group in Riau.

River Care Programme (RCP)



Jan 14: GEC collaborated with QUEST International University (QIU) to hold a tree planting programme at the lake owned by JPS - close to Sungai Pinji, Ulu Kinta, Perak. It was attended by 60 participants including 50 QIU staffs and seven students and three GEC officers, who planted 50 trees (*Bucida molineti* and *Syzygium myrtifolium*) at the lake areas which is often used by local community as a recreational area.

Jan 19 & 20: Launching of the Community Garden took place as part of the commitment towards long-term food security through the W.A.T.E.R project (implemented by GEC since 2007). The launch of "Towards Healthy Watersheds 2030" at Sg Penchala Information Centre was officiated by Stacey Tank, Chief Corporate Affairs and Transformation Officer of Heineken N.V was attended by over 50 guests including community members, media representatives and GEC.

Feb 7: GEC carried out a SMART Ranger programme on Integrated Solid Waste Management in collaboration with University of Technology PETRONAS (UTP) students at Sekolah Kebangsaan Ayer Denak, Tronoh, introducing primary school students to the 4R2C concept.



Feb 13–17: GEC carried out an expedition to Mount Korbu attended by five firefighters, three forest officers, six mountain guides and seven members of the OA community. The five-day expedition aimed to enhance the track, install camera traps, do kilometre marking and get final inputs from the experts on the track as well as way forward in terms of maintenance.

Feb 28: A Best Management Practices Training for Selected Business Players through Green Living Initiatives was held at Kinta Riverfront Hotel with total of 37 participants consist of 13 industries, 5 agricultural, 4 small business entrepreneurs (food operators) and 2 other business players.



March 11: The launch of the GEC-CIMB Islamic Bank's Restoration and Rehabilitation of Sungai Batu through Biodiversity Enhancement (a tributary of the Klang River Basin) took place at the Kompleks Dataran Bougainvillea involving seven nearby villages. The event also included the Young River Scientist Programme, the River Health Monitoring and Biodiversity, and the Campaign on Impact of invasive fish in our local rivers through the Fish & Release Competition.



Mar 19: To support urban garden initiatives, an Urban Farming workshop for communities around the Kinta River Basin was held in KRT Klebang Selatan. The two-session workshop (morning and evening) was attended by a total of 87 participants from 25 different community groups. The workshop was supported by the attendance of guest speaker, Mr. Sahrul Fuzain from UrbanFarmHQ.

Mar 20: A second workshop on Kinta River Health Targets was conducted as continuation of discussion and to get final inputs from various stakeholders in setting the river health's monitoring plan, that is by four components – physical, biological, chemical and citizen participations. Thirty participants from 18 government departments/agencies, two NGOs and four universities attended the workshop.



Outreach & Partnerships Programme

Under the tree planting for Yayasan PETRONAS Walk4Trees programme, to-date GEC has successfully planted more than 60K trees in 14 sites across 11 states in Malaysia with the help of community leaders and members and support of respective state and federal authorities. In addition, fire prevention and water management activities were carried out in three of the peatland sites at Raja Musa Forest Reserve (RMFR) in Selangor, Nenasi (Extension) Forest Reserve in Pahang and Binsuluk Forest Reserve in Sabah.

Planned events

The following are the planned GEC events and activities from April to June 2023:

| Date (TBC) | Venue | Event |
|-----------------|--|---|
| APRIL | | |
| 12 April | University of Nottingham Malaysia | Sustainability Workshop talk on Environmental Education and Citizen Science Initiatives – GEC Approach |
| 12 April | ASTRO | GEC exhibition in conjunction with ASTRO's Earth Day event |
| 10-16 April | San Francisco, Agusan del Sur, Philippines | Training of Trainers (TOT) on Peatland Assessment and Manager |
| 17 April | Online Platform | HSBC Global NbS Accelerator: NbS Project Cluster calls |
| MAY | | |
| May / June | GAFR, Mersing | GAFR conservation project launch |
| May 2023 | Ladang Nenas Takuli, Beaufort | Canal Blocking and Fire Awareness Programme |
| May 2023 | Pekan, Pahang | Fire prevention awareness talks and tree planting activities for stakeholders |
| 6 May | KRT Klebang Selatan, Perak | Healthy Diet training |
| 9 May | Taylor's University | Flood Preparedness talk |
| 10 May | Penchala Information Centre | Education event with UPM |
| 11 May (TBC) | Webinar | Warning on fire risk and El Niño Event |
| 12 May | RMFR | NUS- MNS Visit |
| 13 May | Taman Sri Muda | Town watching training with Taylor students |
| 16 May | Sungai Limau | TNB Visit site to Sungai Limau, Perak |
| 17 May | Raja Musa Forest Reserve | HSBC Volunteers tree Planting at FC 82 |
| 19 May | TLS International School | River, water and waste management talk |
| 19-21 May | Hotel Seri Malaysia, Taiping | YSD Community-based Entrepreneur Training |
| 20 May | PJ Eco Recycling Plaza | Waste management site visit |
| 20 May | KLNFR | Monthly Tree Planting supported by BOH |
| 30 May – 1 June | UNITEN (TBC) | Bengkel Libat Urus under 'Projek Pengurusan Tanah Lestari Di Kawasan Sensitif (Tanah Gambut)' |
| TBC | Kampung Dua Belas Gombak | Tree planting training |
| TBC | Section 14 | RIVER Ranger Training |
| TBC | Section 19 | RIVER Ranger Training |
| TBC | Kampung Sungai Kertas, Batu Caves | FLOOD Ranger Training |
| TBC | Kg.Nakhoda | Tree planting (Bioengineering initiatives) |
| TBC | Kg Sungai Tonggang, Perak | Launching Mountain Bike and Outdoor Recreational Space |
| TBC | Kg Makmur, Perak | Malim Gunung training for OA Kg Makmur |
| TBC | Sg Way | River Clean Up |
| JUNE | | |
| 3 June | Taman Tasik Permaisuri, Kuala Lumpur | GEC Exhibition at Fun Walk-A-Maze |
| 8-10 June | Selangor | ASEAN Expert Workshop for Information and Data Collection and Results Management for Fire and Haze in ASEAN |
| 12 – 15 June | RMFR | Garden International School Discovery Week |
| 17 June | Tebuk Mendeleng | ISF Mangrove Tree Planting Programme |
| 22 June | Bukit Belata (Ext) Forest Reserve | Stakeholder Visit to Prosper Recovery Project at Bukit Belata (Ext.) Forest Reserve |
| 24 June | RMFR | Monthly Tree Planting |
| TBC | EDT, Melaka | Tree Planting with KAP & BKSA |