



QUARTERLY UPDATE TO GEC BOARD OF MANAGEMENT AND ADVISORY COUNCIL (OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2021)

Introduction

This report is submitted to the Board of Management and Advisory Council of Global Environment Centre (GEC) to provide updates on the progress of GEC's activities and finances for the fourth quarter (Q4) of 2021, i.e. October to December 2021. With some states entering into Phase Four of the National Recovery Plan (NRP), namely Selangor (Oct 18) and Perak (Nov 8) implementation of the field activities at the respective project locations were undertaken with strict adherence to the COVID-19 Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). With the acquisition of Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) approval in September, the implementation of the on-site project activities accelerated in this quarter to execute activities previously impeded due to the total lockdown, as well as Phase One to Three of the National Recovery Plan (NRP).

Progress Updates

River Care Programme



The launch gambit for the "Mainstreaming Biodiversity into Riverine Management", included the signing of the plaque at the entrance of the cabin.

Under the Global Environment Facility Cycle 5 (GEF5) project on "Mainstreaming Biodiversity into Riverine Management", the activities carried out at Klang River Basin site were focused more on networking, as well as organising several virtual and physical activities. Sg Klang Urban Open Classroom was launched on Oct 23 by Dato' Ir Jamil Shaari, Director of River Basin Division, DID Malaysia. As at December 2021, with support from the GEF5 project, the membership of Friends of Klang River Basin (FoKRB), more than doubled to 68 members. Within the Klang River basin alone, there are 19 Friends of River groups empowered and supported under the FoKRB Network.

On Oct 2, an online Zoom session entitled "Perkongsian Inisiatif Komuniti Sungai", was held to listen to and address the needs of these communities, who are at the forefront of ongoing initiatives related to mainstreaming biodiversity into riverine management: taking into account their progress, plans and their needs to sustain their ongoing initiatives.

At the Upper Kinta Basin (UKB) project site, the Sg Kinta Open Classroom (SKROC) was established, together with a river walk. All the five trial plots in the pilot bio engineering demonstration site were well established, and a site visit was organised for stakeholders on Oct 26. The One-Stop Education Centre (OSEC) at Kampung Tonggang was fully constructed and furnished through funding from United Nations Development Programme- Orangs Asli/Orang Asal (UNDP-OA) Micro Grant Facility (MGF) and is now fully operational.



Under the W.A.T.E.R. project, flowering plants as well as herbs were planted along Sg Way River bank to rejuvenate riverine biodiversity. Additionally, a new, one-hectare site in Raja Musa Forest Reserve was reforested, following the initial one-hectare planted in 2019. Also, five new rainwater harvesting systems were established within the Selangor river basin.

Forest and Coastal Programme

The conservation, protection, restoration and fire prevention activities were carried out on a small-scale, primarily with the involvement of the local community through the cooperation and support from the relevant local government authorities. Following are the key activities that have been carried out during this quarter:

- Community-based tree planting activities: Planting 2,580 peatland and 29,000 mangrove trees at the degraded areas with the support from SPARK Foundation, Yayasan Petronas, Treasure The Mangrove, Tenaga Nasional Berhad, Yayasan Sime Darby (YSD) and UNDP-Ministry of Finance (UNDP-MOF) projects.
- Raised 10,000 peatland trees and more than 29,000 mangrove trees at the community-based peatland nurseries (Sahabat Hutan Gambut Selangor Utara - SHGSU, Sahabat Gambut Asli Temuan - SGAT and Komuniti Warisan Hutan Sg. Tenggi Selatan - KWHSTS) and mangrove nurseries (Sahabat Hutan Bakau Dato' Horat - SHBKDH, Sahabat Hutan Bakau Pulau Tanjung Surat- SHBPTS, Sahabat Hutan Bakau Pasir Panjang Laut - SHBPPL and Sahabat Hutan Bakau Kuala Gula - SHBKG) for the rehabilitation projects.
- Constructed 16 new canal blocks at FC 32, 93, 100 and 102 of Raja Musa Forest Reserve (RMFR).
- Conducted field surveys at existing and proposed permanent forest reserves to identify the peat swamp forests for the development the Peat Swamp Forest Management Plan in Johor.
- Conducted community-wide surveys at Kampung Orang Asli Bukit Cheeding and Pulau Kempas and published community baseline survey report as a blueprint to develop training and monitor improvements in terms of awareness, knowledge and income of the Orang Asli community.
- Conducted a peer learning visit to GEC-CoSPeC and local community of RMFR for one of PETRONAS Walk4Trees Programme's project partner, Badan Kawal Selia Air (BKSA) Melaka delegation on Oct 23 and 24.
- Presented several talks on peat swamp forests for people and climate in online webinars organised by project funders and academic institutions.
- Conducted eight awareness programmes at two locations (Tanjung Surat, Johor with SHBPTS and Sabak Bernam, Selangor with SHBKDH)
- Manually constructed a new 200m tidal channel to ensure the sea water flow reaches the mangrove planting site at Kg Sungai Limau in Manjung, Perak.
- Produced two samples of mangrove-based products with the Kuala Gula and Pasir Panjang Laut community i.e. botanical drinks from *Acanthus ilicifolius* (daun jeruju) and *Sonneratia caseolaris* (buah berembang @ mangrove apple), and started development of other products (cordials, 3-in-1 coffee and 3-in-1 tea). An online, basic training social entrepreneurship was conducted by Sidratul Corporation Sdn Bhd for the local communities.
- Provided flood relief and aid to 48 families from Kampung Orang Asli Pulau Kempas and Kampung Sungai Perdak affected by the devastating December floods, including food baskets, basic necessities and equipment as well as cash contribution.



Peer learning visit to RMFR and GEC-CoSPeC for the BKSA delegation for the PETRONAS Walk4Trees Programme in October.



Group photo of families affected by the floods at Kampung Sungai Perdak receiving aid.

Peatland Programme

GEC continued our work at grassroot level for Southeast Pahang Peatland Landscape (SEPPL), Klias Peninsular Peatland Landscape (KPPL) and at Kg Buntal, Sarawak. Progress made for Yayasan Petronas Walk4Trees programme included completion of the saplings planting at all sites by November 2021, first cycle maintenance at SEPPL (November 2021); completed two (2) cycles at Kg Buntal (October & December 2021) and KPPL (December 2021); and a Monitoring & Evaluation site visit at Binsuluk site on Dec 18 with Yayasan Petronas. Hydrology and vegetation assessment activities under YPPH-GEC recovery project were conducted at Pekan Forest Reserve from mid-October to mid-November.



Khazanah Research Institute Discussion

At national and state level activities, GEC provided support to the National and State Project Management Offices (Pahang and Selangor) of Sustainable Peatland Management Ecosystem Malaysia (SMPEM) Project for Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB) and Procurement Plan development on Nov 24. GEC was actively involved in seminars, workshops, dialogues and meetings related to peatlands, included Khazanah Research Institute's Financing For Climate Action Discussion (Dec 14), Wetland Technical Committee Meeting and Johor Living Landscape Approach (Dec 9), and Malaysia Climate Change Law Workshop (Nov 24 & Dec 1).

For regional and international level activities, GEC under the Measurable Action for Haze-Free Sustainable Land Management in Southeast Asia (MAHFSA) project partnering with Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretariat and Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), together with ASEAN Peatland Partners organised two side events at 26th United Nations Conference for Climate Change (COP26). GEC was also invited by Government of Indonesia to present papers at Indonesia Pavilion, and by Tzu Chi Foundation to contribute to one press conference on sustainable land management at the COP26. We



also virtually presented the progress update of MAHFSA at 16th Technical Working Group on Transboundary Haze Pollution in the Mekong Sub-Region meeting on Dec 7. In addition, we conducted online training for the Mekong Peatlands Project on Nov 22 for Module 3: Field Verification and Mapping of Peatlands and Module 4: Assessment of Peatland Degradation Status and Management Issues for Cambodia.



Outreach & Partnership

Following the success of two conference sessions co-hosted by GEC at the Virtual International Greentech & Eco Products Exhibition & Conference Malaysia (IGEM 2021) in Q3 2021, GEC held a third conference session entitled Peatland Management: Nature-based Solutions for Climate Change in Southeast Asia on Oct 14. The lively, two-hour session featured a distinguish panel of speakers from Malaysia and Indonesia as well as ASEAN Secretariat, and was well attended by about 100 participants.

Under the Yayasan Petronas Walk4Trees tree-planting programme, 21 community groups have been involved in setting up nurseries: they have prepared 53,321 seedlings to be planted in 14 sites across 10 states, and a total of 39,958 saplings were planted by community members in five sites between January and December 2021.

Under the National River Care Fund (NRCF), GEC organised the River Care Awards 2021 ceremony held virtually on Oct 10. The event was officiated by Dato' Ir Hj Nor Hisham Mohd Ghazali, Director-General, Drainage and Irrigation Department Malaysia.

During the tragic floods of Dec 18 weekend, two media statements on the pressing concerns were prepared and sent out: one from GEC and another with a coalition of 45 NGOs and interest groups, while GEC also gave multiple media interviews. This resulted in extensive coverage on the topic for the rest of 2021 and beyond.

In December, in conjunction with International Volunteer Day, GEC presented at a Sharing Session on Volunteering at Universiti Putra Malaysia's Virtual Volunteer Fair. It was well attended by over 100 UPM students and friends via Zoom and FB Live. Many students showed a keen interest in participating in GEC's volunteer programmes in 2022.

The following are the planned GEC events and activities from January to March 2022:

Date (TBC)	Venue	Event
Jan 6 to 9	Selangor	Filming under YSD project "Layar Liar" for mangrove conservation efforts by SHBKG & GEC
Jan 11	Zoom platform	Initial Workshop on MAHFSA Investment Framework Development
Jan 19	Selangor	MoA signing ceremony with Intercontinental Specialty Fats Sdn Bhd for mangrove tree planting at Kg Dato Hormat
Jan 20 to 21	Zoom platform	Peat Symposium of Lao PDR
Jan 21 to 24	Kuala Kangsar, Perak	Community sustainable enterprise training under YSD project
Jan 26	Perak	Webinar "Pengenalan Program Pemulihan Pantai Pulau Pangkor" with UTP (online)
Jan 29	TTDI	Sg Kayu Ara River Health and Riverine Biodiversity Monitoring
Jan (TBD)	Klang Urban River Education Centre	River Clean up activity
Jan to Apr	Southeast Pahang and Northeast Johor	Fish Diversity Study
Jan to Mar	YPPH	Community livelihood project
Jan (TBD)	Kinta River Basin	Rapid Environmental Assessment
Feb/Mar	Klang Urban River Open Classroom	Maybank CSR
Feb 26	RMFR	World Wetlands Day: Launch of Monthly tree planting
Mar 26	EDT, RMFR	YP finale event tree planting programme
Mar 18 to 21	Perak	YSD project closing event at Kuala Gula / Manjung
Mar 26	RMFR	Monthly tree planting