

GEC QUARTERLY UPDATE (JANUARY TO MARCH 2024)

Introduction

This report provides updates on the progress of GEC's activities for the first quarter (Q1) of 2024: January to March. This quarter included the GEC 25th Anniversary event on 29th January and the election of Dato Halimah Hassan as the new GEC Chairperson replacing our dearly departed founding chairman, Allahyarham Zainudin Ismail. We were also happy to welcome two new Advisory Council Members Dato Dr Mohd Puat bin Dahalan and former Selangor State Exco member Elizabeth Wong.

River Care Programme (RCP)



In January, a series of river monitoring activities was conducted with support from Fujitsu with selected stakeholders and communities along Sungai Pantai. A water conservation webinar was also conducted for over 200 Fujitsu's global staff from various countries including Malaysia, Philippines, India, Portugal and Poland.

On Jan 20, the Community-based Cyberjaya Lake Garden Ecological Restoration project, supported by the Society for Ecological Restoration (SER) and funded by Microsoft, was launched. Various activities were held including pollinator garden establishment, story telling by the lake, lake ranger and bioblitz. On Jan 28 & 29, an educational trip for seven community members (Orang Asli and local community) from Ipoh was made to the Klang Valley as part of capacity building.



On the Feb 3, tree planting by 105 staff and students from Quest International University (QIU) took place at Sungai Pinji Pool Recreation Park. A mini playground was also launched as a collaborative initiative by QIU's Community Service, in partnership with GEC and the Department of Irrigation and Drainage, Perak. GEC also organised a RIVER Ranger Training session with the community of KRT Chemor Idaman and a Zero Waste Programme with community of KRT Malim Nawar in February. A three-day Young River Scientist Programme was held from Feb 20-24 with Gardens International School.



Various activities were carried out in March. These included a garden clean-up, as part of the establishment of a new community garden under W.A.T.E.R Project at Section 22, Petaling Jaya, by community members and volunteers from Sunway University and staffs from SPARK Foundation and two RIVER Ranger training events, one with University Tunku Abdul Rahman

(UTAR) and the other for key project stakeholders. A community garden maintenance activity was also carried out with staff of F5 Malaysia at Taman Warisan.



On March 9, community members and volunteers from Sunway University came together at the pollinator garden at Section 14 River Trail for a garden maintenance activity. A river walk with 30 participants was conducted on March 10, at Bukit Kiara under W.A.T.E.R Project. On March 23, a wetland planting activity was held at Cyberjaya Lake Garden under SER Project with 10 ELC International School students and 2 community volunteers.

GEC hosted an exhibition on the W.A.T.E.R. Project at the Global and Asia Pacific Corporate Affairs Directors Forum organised by Heineken Malaysia on March 27 and a talk was given by Dr Kali at UNESCO-Water Family Webinar, "Water for Prosperity and Peace" co-organised by UNESCO, Chulalongkorn University, and Faculty of Engineering at Chulalongkorn University in conjunction with World Water Day 2024 on March 21.

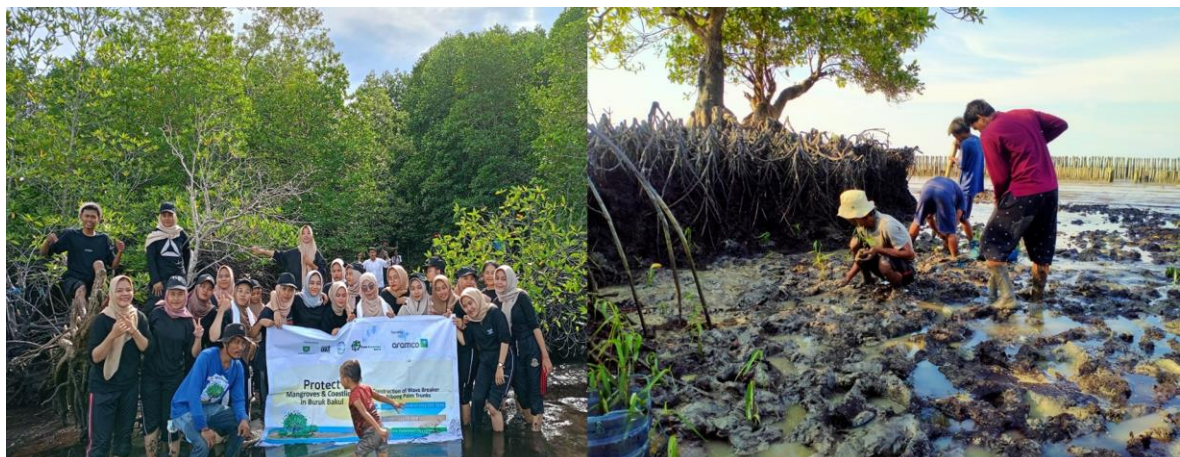
Forest and Coastal Programme (FCP)

Ecosystem Restoration

A total of 28,680 mangrove trees were planted with the involvement of more than 568 volunteers, including 23,600 mangrove trees planted in 11.8 ha of degraded areas in Johor, Perak, Selangor, and Kedah under the Yayasan Sime Darby (22,600 trees) and Aramco Malaysia (1,000 trees) projects.

A total of 8,500 peatland and high-quality trees were successfully planted under the Prosper (Phase 1 & 2) project (7,100 trees), HSBC volunteering project (300 trees) and Monthly Tree Planting Programme (1,200 trees with 204 volunteers) at FC 24, BBEFR and FC 99 & 100, RMFR.

In Indonesia 5,080 mangrove trees were planted in Buruk Bakul Village, Indonesia by Sekat Bakau Community Group under the funding from Aramco Asia Singapore.



Mangrove trees planted in Buruk Bakul by Sekat Bakau Community Group and volunteers under the Aramco Indonesia project.

Environmental Education Workshops and Programmes

A clean-up programme was organised by GEC and SHBKDH for 50 pax of Ericsson volunteers at Kampung Dato' HORMAT on Feb 8.

A peer-learning visit was organised for the newly established community group of Mersing to Pulau Tanjung Surat on March 6, for exposure to community-based conservation efforts, CBO management, and livelihood programmes. The visit includes activities such as mangrove tree planting, kampung tour and a sharing session.

GEC and SGAT set up an exhibition booth at Taman Tugu on March 9 during the “Berbudi Bersama Khazanah Nasional” event to promote Temuan Culture Information Centre (TCIC), Indigenous Village Tourism Package (IVTP) and indigenous community products and handicrafts to the local community.

GEC and SGAT were invited as guest panellists to the 37th Ilmu Hasanah Forum on March 19 to share their experience on the importance of community leadership in ensuring the sustainability and continuity of project activities after completion by Yayasan Hasanah.



GEC-SGAT's Exhibition during “Berbudi Bersama Khazanah Nasional” event at Taman Tugu

Community-based Initiatives

Four (4) mangrove-based beverages (Mangrove Brew and Tea Tide) were produced with the support of local communities – processed by Sidratul Corporation and certification by the health and Islamic authorities. A total of 4,912 boxes of products have been promoted and marketed in several events such as FAMA Fest at Gopeng Perak, GEC 25th Anniversary Forum, JTPP meeting and during external purchasing.

GEC Participated in FAMA Fest Perak at RTC Gopeng from Feb 29 to March 4 to promote the sales of mangrove-based beverage products to the public. The programme has provided valuable experience to GEC and SHBKG regarding public marketing and sales strategies.

Peatland Programme (PP)

Pahang

GEC set up an exhibition at the Cultural Exchange Programme with Australia’s Aboriginal Education Center, University of Adelaide on Feb 7, in conjunction with World Wetland Day. Among the issues showcased were fire prevention and monitoring, enhancing community’s livelihood and empowerment of women among the community in the SE Pahang peatland landscape.



In February and March, GEC was actively involved in controlling fires in the peatlands in the YPPH-GEC recovery project area in Se Pahang. This included providing support to agencies that were involved, in particular, aerial (drone) monitoring, fire break construction and engagement of communities in fire control action. Subsequently, awareness events were organised in the landscape for fire prevention awareness. Fourteen small floating pumps were provided for small scale fire control by different villages and a training course was organised for community fire patrollers.



Sabah and Sarawak

In Sabah, the MyGAP certification continued at Ladang Nenas Kg. Takuli, with seven participants passing the field inspection and farm records, while the others are still under guidance to meet the passing criteria. On March 6, a hands-on training was conducted by Agricultural Officers to prepare the participants for the next audit.

In Sarawak, a stakeholder meeting was held at Bario, Sarawak on Feb 27. Rapid surveys were conducted to identify upland peatlands.



Regional Programme

GEC actively promoted the ASEAN Investment Framework for Haze-Free Sustainable Land Management (AIF-HFSLM) by organising multiple discussions with key stakeholders in ASEAN including Asian Development Bank, ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity and the Pollution Control Department (PCD) Thailand. In addition, GEC co-organised a workshop on Haze Pollution Prevention and Response with Natural Resources and Environment Research Institute (NRERI) Lao PDR in Vientiane. The workshop focused on preventing haze through national policy enhancement. It was attended by various government agencies responsible for addressing haze-related issues.



Under the Mekong Peatlands Project, two documents have been drafted and are being finalised, namely Summary of Lessons Learnt, and Guidelines for Conservation, Rehabilitation and Sustainable Use of Peatlands in Mekong sub-region. The documents are under review by the project Regional Coordination Unit and government representatives from Cambodia and Lao PDR before finalisation.

Yayasan Gambut

On March 2, 2024, a mangrove monitoring training session was conducted with speakers from the Faculty of Fisheries and Maritime Affairs, Riau University. During the training, participants learned about the fundamentals of the mangrove ecosystem (theoretically), how mangroves are distributed, how they are generally grouped, according to the benefits they provide to the surrounding landscape. They also practiced surveying mangrove vegetation in the field.



Outreach and Partnership Programme (OPP)



GEC marked its 25th anniversary by hosting a 25th Anniversary Forum on Jan 29 which had been postponed from December 2023 following the demise of GEC Chairman Zainudin Ismail. The forum featured multiple stakeholders – both local and regional to share success stories from GEC’s journey with them over the years and present some of their aspirations for the coming decades. GEC took the opportunity to highlight its work across the landscapes: forest (mangrove,

peat and terrestrial) and river, as well as the community-based products from their community partners at the GEC exhibition area. The event culminated with the unveiling of GEC’s 2050 Vision & Strategy and the launch of a network of Indigenous Peoples and Local Community (IPLC) organisations under GEC called the GEC Community Network (GCN) or Jaringan Komuniti GEC (JKGEC). The event was officiated by **YB Dato’ Sri Huang Tiong Sii**, Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environmental Sustainability, Malaysia.

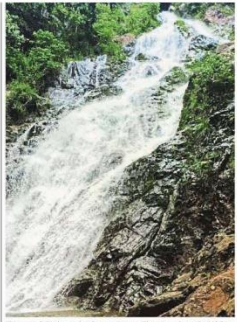


In January 2024, GEC was elected as the Chair of the Global Environment Facility-Civil Society Organizations (GEF CSO) Network comprising more than 500 CSOs worldwide. GEC coordinated a series of meetings, including with the Coordination Committee and GEF Secretariat, organised an online training for the newly elected Regional Focal Points and actively participated in the 66th GEF Council meeting in February 2024.

On 19 March 2024, GEC Director, Faizal presented a paper on “ASEAN Investment Framework” at the ASEAN Business and Biodiversity Initiative (ABBI) Planning Workshop organised by ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity in the Philippines.

Visibility

There were 28 media coverages on GEC between January and March 2024 (RCP: 11, FCP: 6, General: 11). These coverages had a total PR value of more than RM 1,713,178 and cumulative potential reach of more than 4,609,500 people.



The waterfall is located at Gunung Numpang. There is a plan to build hiking trails in the area. — iFleg



Taman Eko-Rimba Sungai Tiga in Hulu Yam is its heritage forest. — Photos: MOHAMMAD SHARIF

A NEW roof, fresh coat of paint and new air-conditioners were given to the Tebuk Mendeling community of Sabak Bernam in Selangor.

OCBC Bank (M) Bhd, which already supports the community through a three-year RM648,538 mangrove rehabilitation programme, donated a further RM20,000 towards improving the facilities of SK Seri Mawar Sungai Air Tawar.

These funds enabled a new roof over the 'pondok belajar' (reading hut) and three new air-conditioners for the computer lab as well as repainting parts of the primary school.

According to headmaster Zool Fadli, the bank's Tebuk Intan branch was quick to respond to the school's request for funds.

OCBC Tebuk Intan branch senior manager Alex Low Chuen Yee said the bank wanted to support local communities.

"A comfortable and well-equipped study environment is vital to academic success."

"I would also like to thank my colleagues who volunteered to conduct a financial literacy session for the pupils," said Low, who participated in the bank's mangrove tree planting programme in 2022.

Low said OCBC Bank understood that meeting the needs of local communities and the environment went beyond just monetary aspects, and

New air-con units, roof for Sabak Bernam school

Primary school pupils have more conducive learning environment



The financial literacy session by OCBC Bank Tebuk Intan branch at SK Seri Mawar.

"A comfortable, well-equipped study environment is vital to academic success."

Alex Low Chuen Yee

Tebuk Mendeling, OCBC Bank tied up with 2022 Merdeka Award recipient Global Environment Centre (GEC) alongside Friends of Kampung Dato Hormat Mangroves for the rehabilitation project, which involved planting the trees and benefiting the local community.

included sustainability. In conjunction with its 50th anniversary in 2022, the bank committed to planting and nurturing 9,000 mangrove trees over 4.5ha of degraded land in

Showcasing Selangor's rich forest heritage

By FARID MAHAM

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WHAT does the creation of Royal Selangor Heritage Forest herald for the preservation of green areas in the state, is a question many are asking.

Stakeholders hope the announcement by Sultan of Selangor Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah will lead to greater protection of the country's ancient forest heritage, spanning 108,000ha.

The heritaged of Sultan Sharafuddin, it encompasses 26 forest reserves and local forests known as Selangor State Park.

Selangor Forestry Department director Ahsan Ahmad said the heritage forest idea was brought up during his audience with Sultan Sharafuddin in March 2022.

"Sultan Sharafuddin had expressed the wish to try to preserve that a suitable area be designated as a heritage forest."

"The aim is to showcase that Selangor has plenty to offer when it comes to nature and biodiversity."

Sultan Sharafuddin also stressed that the welfare of the Orang Asli communities living in the heritage forest must not be neglected.

Ahmad said a study was done by the Forestry Department, Faculty of Forestry, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), which Sultan Sharafuddin is chairperson.

Coming up with a study plan which contains proposed development inside the forest."

Forestry Dept: Masterplan to strike balance between social, economic and environmental concerns



Ahsan says the heritage forest will be gazetted if the state government deems it necessary.



Datin Seri hopes heritage status will be granted to peat and mangrove swamps too.



Faizal wants the masterplan made available to stakeholders to allow for input.

The masterplan among others, focuses on striking a balance between social and economic needs as well as environmental concerns.

"On the way to, the masterplan was launched by Sultan Sharafuddin. Also present was Raja Muda of Selangor Tengku Amir Shah.

The masterplan among others, focuses on striking a balance between social and economic needs as well as environmental concerns.

However, a heritage forest would not be exempt from a potential development, said Ahsan, adding that the usual procedure would still apply.

This includes holding public hearing sessions to gather stakeholders' input and identifying a replacement forest to be gazetted if needed.

"The heritage forest is a rebranding exercise which comprises 26 forest reserves, which include Taman Eko-Rimba Kemuning and Taman Eko-Rimba Sungai Tiga, to form one heritage forest."

"It can be designated if the state government deems there is a necessity for certain areas to be developed."

Examples would include building public facilities such as dams, power lines and roads, he said.

Selangor currently has 79 forest reserves, covering 211,000ha, roughly one-third of the state's land area.

However, many of these reserves are scattered throughout the state and are therefore not included in the heritage forest.

But efforts are ongoing to identify more forest reserves to be given heritage status, said Ahsan.

To obtain the status, the forest must be classified either as low-land riparian forest, hill dipterocarp or swamp forest, he noted.

Global Environment Centre (GEC) director Faizal Parbh called on the authorities to make available the heritage forest masterplan to allow for input from stakeholders.

He also hopes the moratorium on logging activities in reserve forests, which includes the heritage forest, will be extended.

In 2019, logging government implemented a 20-year moratorium on logging activities in all

By SARACE CHEN

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WILDFIRES were raging in a patch of forest in a remote area of Selangor, Malaysia, on Monday (13 March), as a result of a lightning strike.

The fire, which was reported to have started in the area where a forest reserve is located, was seen by a local resident.

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Hot, dry weather fanning flames in forest reserve

Studies show most fires in Selangor caused by cigarette butt, open burning by hunters and fari

STARMETRO, WEDNESDAY 13 MARCH 2024

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Planned events

The following are the planned GEC events and activities from April to July 2024:

Date	Venue	Event
April 2024		
2	DID, Perak	Sg Kinta PWG meeting
3	Fujitsu	SDG11 & 12: Mastering Sustainable Waste Management: Strategies for a Cleaner, Greener Future
3	FC 52, RMFR, Selangor	Peatland survey and internal training
4	CoSPeC, Selangor	FCP in-house training
9-10	Lao PDR	Installation of AQMS and User Training
11	Lao PDR	Stakeholder meeting on AIF-HFSLM
15-17	Kota Tinggi, Muar and Pontian, Johor	Survey of peatland in agricultural areas and train local farmers
16-19	Armada Hotel, PJ, Selangor	Climate Action Network Southeast Asia (CANSEA) Regional Meetings
17-19	Merbok and Kuala Muda, Kedah	Mangrove assessment and community engagement
17 -20	Mersing, Johor	Community training
18	GEC HQ/Remote	UAT 1 Fire Alert Tools
21 -22	Pengerang, Johor	PPB's visit to Vita Tenggara and Pulau Tanjung Surat
22-30	Kota Tinggi, Johor	Mangrove Forest Ranger Mangrove School Carnival (District level) focusing at 10 schools from Kota Tinggi
23-26	Bandung, Indonesia	International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) Monitoring & Evaluation and Knowledge Management Training
26	Online	Meeting with Leader Energy
26	Taman Tugu, Federal Territory Kuala Lumpur	PPB Group CSR Programme
27	RMFR, Selangor	Monthly Tree Planting
27	Bario, Sarawak	Palm Planting event
27	Sg Pantai, Federal Territory Kuala Lumpur	River Monitoring activity with Fujitsu Malaysia
27	Kinta River Basin (KRB)	UTAR Learning Education Trip to KRB Hub
28	Sg Pantai, Federal Territory Kuala Lumpur	River Monitoring activity with PPR Kerinchi and PPR Kg Limau
29	Sg Pantai, Federal Territory Kuala Lumpur	River Monitoring activity with Fujitsu Malaysia
29	Klang	Launching by Minister of Agriculture of Guidelines for Management of Existing Agriculture on Peat
May 2024		
2-7	Kota Tinggi, Johor	Mangrove Forest Reserve Mangrove School Carnival (District level) focusing at 10 schools from Kota Tinggi
3-6	KDH/Taman Alam/CoSPeC, Selangor	Vietnam Peer Learning Visit to Selangor
2	Beaufort, Sabah	Stakeholder Meeting, Beaufort District
3	Kota Kinabalu, Sabah	State level Stakeholder Meeting and Natural Resources Office
3	Kota Kinabalu, Sabah	Presentation of Conservation Partner Award to GEC by Sabah Forestry Department
4	Cyberjaya Lake Gardens, Selangor	Wetland planting with Microsoft staffs and volunteers
6-8	Pahang	Peatland survey in agricultural areas and train local farmers
12	Mersing, Johor	UNDP SDG Prelude ECER event
13	Kuala Langat	Visit from All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia-Sustainable Development Goal to TCIC

18	Blok A Damansara Bistari, Selangor	Mural painting for community and GEC staffs
19	RMFR, Selangor	National University of Singapore Visit
24-29	Vietnam	GEC-Aramco Visit to mangrove conservation project in Vietnam
25	Ipoh, Perak	Flood Preparedness Training
25	RMFR, Selangor	Monthly Tree planting
26	Taman Rimba Kiara	Friends of Bukit Kiara Earth Day 2024
30	Kg OA Jong, Pahang	Fire awareness event
TBD	Kalimantan, Indonesia	RSPO training on BMPs
TBD	GEC HQ/Remote	UAT 2 Fire Alert Tools
TBD	GEC HQ/Remote	Finalisation of Guidelines for Conservation, Rehabilitation and Sustainable Use of The Mekong Peatlands Project.
June 2024		
1	Sg Way, Selangor	Sg Way Clean Up Siri 1
8/22	Tebuk Mendeleng, Selangor	ISF mangrove tree planting
13	PETROSAINS, KLCC	GEC participation in PETRONAS Exhibition
17-21	Washington DC, US	67 th Global Environment Facility (GEF) Council
22	RMFR, Selangor	Monthly Tree planting
29	Cyberjaya Lake Garden, Selangor	Pollinator garden maintenance and bioblitz
TBD	Kg Pasir Panjang Laut, Perak	Fire awareness campaign
TBD	Kg Pasir Panjang Laut, Perak	Community-based Tourism briefing