Sustainable management and harvest of Malaysia's production forest

1. Forest is a state matter. The forestry sector in Peninsular Malaysia is guided by the National Forestry Policy 1978 (Revised 1992) (NFP) and the National Forestry Act 1984 (NFA) administered by the Forestry Department Peninsular Malaysia. This Policy streamlines forest management at the state level in Peninsular Malaysia. All eleven State Governments in Peninsular Malaysia have adopted this standardized framework and passed it as State enactments. The states of Sabah and Sarawak16 have independent forest management policies that contain similar provisions to the NFP. In Sabah, the Sabah Forest Policy 2018 was launched to reinforce objectives for environment protection, biodiversity conservation, and socio-economic well-being. For Sarawak, the new Forests Ordinance (Chapter 71) 2015 was enacted to repeal the Forest Ordinance 1958. This Ordinance enhanced the deterrent punishments and strengthened provisions for enforcement agencies to search and investigate.

2. In Peninsular Malaysia, the National Forestry Policy 1978 (Rev. 1992) states that the "Permanent Forest Estate", also known as the Permanent Reserved Forest, will be managed, and classified under four (4) major functions: Production Forest; Protection Forest; Amenity Forest; and Research & Education Forest. Under the National Forestry Policy, the conservation of biological diversity is an explicit objective of Protection Forest as well as Research and Education Forest. Further, the National Forestry Act 1984 gives provision for all or part of a PRF to be classed as one or more of eleven (11) functional classes which can be matched to the four functions specified in the NFP. State Governments in Peninsular have adopted aspects of the National Forestry Act into their respective State Forest Enactments. Several states have added a twelfth functional class, '(l) State Park' to their forestry enactments. Within the Production Forests, various management prescriptions are implemented, such as:
    a. Maintaining the species compositions of dipterocarps and non-dipterocarps after forest harvesting

b. Retention of 32 timber tree species which are important as food source and nesting site for fauna such as primates, birds, and squirrels
c. Establishment of HCVFs for critical ecosystems and Endangered, Rare, and Threatened species
d. Implementation of harvesting activities in accordance with the enforced Guidelines on Reduced Impact Logging
e. Implementation of river buffers as wildlife corridors
f. Implementation of forest management certification under the internationally recognized certification standards

3. In Sabah, the Sabah Forest Enactment 1968 covers Forest Reserves. The forest reserves are then categorized into one or more of the seven classes according to their management objective. Forest management is characterized by the Forest Management Units (FMUs), which is a partnership of the Sabah Forestry Department with the private sector, formalized through a signed long-term licence agreement known as Sustainable Forest Management Licence Agreements (SFMLA). Under this FMU system, the SFMLA holders carry out their forest management activities based on a 10-year Forest Management Plan (FMP). The plan details how the FMU areas can be sustainably managed through the multiple-use forest management concept where social, economic and environmental requirements are taken into consideration. Recently, the concept of Managed Retention towards No Net Loss/Net Gain as an offset strategy is implemented. An HCV map will be produced in 2019 to aid the Sabah government in decision-making on future land development while keeping their protected areas target of 30% State land by 2025. The map will also guide the consolidation of forest management plans into a strategic state-wide forest management plan which considers the connectivity of conservation or protected areas based on ecological functions.

4. In Sarawak, the Forest is classified as the Permanent Forest Estate (PFE, which includes Forest Reserves, Protected Forests and Communal Forests) and Totally Protected Areas (National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries and Nature Reserves) and State Land Forests. Since early 2000, the Sarawak State Government has adopted a policy for expanding its PFE area to six (6) million ha

and TPA to one (1) million ha. Also, the State Government of Sarawak approved Forest Management Certification (FMC) Policy in August 2015. The State Government has also made it mandatory for all long-term forest timber licensees within the PFE to obtain Forest Management Certification by 2022. A Conservation Internship Programme (CIP) implemented in collaboration with the timber industry is also carried out to enhance sustainable forest management practices in Sarawak. The programme has trained 27 interns who have since been employed by the timber industry.

5. The sustainability certification for timber and timber products are largely voluntary. At present, timber certification in Malaysia includes two components: Forest Management Certification (FMC) and Chain-of-Custody (CoC) certification. For FMC, the total area of certified natural forests under the Malaysian Timber Certification Scheme (MTCS) increased from 4.00 million ha in 2016 to 4.205million ha as of September 2019, against the Malaysian Criteria and Indicators for Forest Management Certification (Natural Forest) [MC&I (Natural Forest)]. Additionally, a total of 109,025.06 ha of forest plantations have been certified against the MC&I Forest Plantation.v2. Under the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), thirteen (13) forest management certification holders of more than 765,405 ha were certified as of July 2019. At the same time, a total of 363 companies have been certified under the PEFC CoC, and a further 17,285 companies were awarded the FSC CoC certificate.