

Headline	Strategy to serve as reference for policies adopted by states		
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**KUALA LUMPUR:** The Malaysian Forestry Policy will serve as a reference and guide to forestry policies adopted in the Peninsula, Sabah and Sarawak, said Energy and Natural Resources Minister Datuk Seri Dr Shamsul Anuar Nasarah.

He said the formulation of the policy was a manifestation of the country's commitment in implementing sustainable forest management.

"It is a major agenda in the country and also a principle held at the international level," he said in his welcoming speech at the launch of the Malaysian Forestry Policy and the 2021 National International Day of Forests at the Forest Research Institute Malaysia here yesterday.

Dr Shamsul said the Malaysian Forestry Policy had been agreed

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upon by all state governments at the 78th National Land Council meeting held on Jan 29.

He said the policy had also gone through a process of negotiations between the Peninsula, Sabah and Sarawak since 2016.

In addition, he said the meeting also agreed that the Peninsular Malaysia Forestry Policy 2020 (DPSM 2020) would replace the National Forestry Policy 1978 (Revised 1992) which is applicable to the Peninsula.

"The three regional forestry

policies, namely the Sabah Forest Policy, the Sarawak Forest Policy and the Peninsular Malaysia Forestry Policy, which focus on strengthening forest management in a sustainable manner, are also part of the Malaysian Forestry Policy," he said.

Meanwhile, Dr Shamsul said despite the Covid-19 pandemic, the ministry managed to achieve several milestones in the forestry sector.

These include the implementation of the Greening Malaysia

Agenda via the 100 Million Trees Planting Campaign and the planting of 18.75 million trees nationwide in 2020.

Others are the nomination of the Penang Hill Biosphere Reserve site under the Man and the Biosphere Programme, Unesco; the nomination of the Endau Rompin Johor National Park as the fourth Asean Heritage Park in Malaysia and the repatriation of nine Orang Utans to Indonesia.

Dr Shamsul also assured

that various initiatives and programmes on forest and biodiversity conservation would continue to be intensified, improved and strengthened from time to time.

"Special focus will be given to the greening Malaysia agenda to enhance forest conservation through tree planting, rehabilitation and restoration of degraded forest areas, in collaboration with state governments under the 12th Malaysia Plan," he said.

He also reiterated the government's commitment to maintain at least 50 percent of the country's land mass under forest cover, as pledged during the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992.

Dr Shamsul said at present, 55.3 percent of the land area in Malaysia, or 18.27 million hectares, are covered by forests. — Bernama